

BBC

OUR BIGGEST
ISSUE EVER!

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March 2013
AED 15

Good Food

MIDDLE EAST

Eco eating

*Making sustainable
food choices is easier
than you think!*

Mother's Day
Celebrate with
bakery-worthy
cupcakes

**Under the
Chilean sun**
Explore Chile's
culinary offerings

WHO WON WHAT?

BBC Good Food Middle East
2012 awards highlights

WIN!
Weekend
getaways, dinner
vouchers and
Taste of Dubai
tickets



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EUROPEAN MEAT

TRADITION QUALITY TASTE

European high quality poultry,
beef and its products

Live cooking shows
by famous Chefs
at booth

P20

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Welcome!



Sustainable food is something we care about deeply at *BBC Good Food ME*. Not just a fad anymore, it is becoming ever more important to think about the effects of what we eat and how we eat it, on not just ourselves, but our environment too. And we couldn't be happier to see how the trend is gathering momentum in this part of the world – from farmers' markets, and specialty stores stocking natural,

organic products, to literary cafes, where you are encouraged to take time out to eat and read, rather than grabbing a bite on the go. It feels like we are finally waking up to smell the coffee – locally produced and fair trade, naturally!

In this issue, we've set out to clear some myths, and show you how simple it is to start making sustainable choices right here. Granted, living in the desert means we don't have the abundance of resources some other regions are blessed with. But what is encouraging, are the strides local farms are making, in growing produce here. Find out where you can shop for such produce in *Shop sustainable, eat sustainable!* on p23. If you would like to go a step further and start thinking about growing your own produce, you'll find all the advice you need in *Grow your own green patch* on p104. We also feature simple, flavourful dishes all using ingredients that are in season, in *Seasonal stars* on p68, as well as take a long hard look at the Slow Food movement in *Go slow!* on p101.

Sustainability is a burning issue particularly when it comes to seafood, with over-fishing becoming a worrying phenomenon. We investigate, in *Fishy business* on p98, as well as share some delicious recipes using sustainable fish in *Treasures from the sea* on p74.

One country where sustainable food isn't just a fashionable culinary term, but rather a way of life, is Chile. I visited this beautiful Latin American destination recently, and was amazed at the diversity of produce, the level of responsibility with which agriculture is handled, and of course, the deliciousness of their cuisine. Read all about my trip in *Chow down in Chile* on p116.

Have a marvellous March, and remember to always choose local, fresh, and seasonal – there will be no turning back!

Sudeshna

Editor's picks



◆ These Made with love measuring spoons are almost too pretty to use! p11.

◆ I always try and buy eco products for the home when possible – this Ecogreen washing up liquid is locally made, which means a lower carbon footprint. Win! p73.



◆ Chile was a fascinating discovery, I can't wait to go back to see the rest of the country. p116.



Serve up spring's brightest shades.



Bring the brightest colours of spring indoors with our vibrant new **Olé collection**. We've got a selection of gorgeous serveware – bowls, plates, cutlery and more to brighten up your table and gatherings. You'll also find vibrant accessories to perk up every room of your home. Visit an @home store near you to take your pick of the bright new arrivals.

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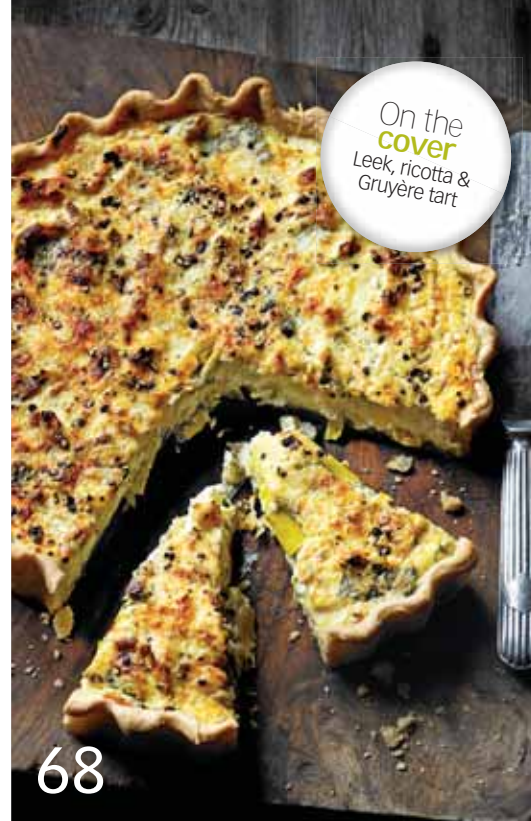
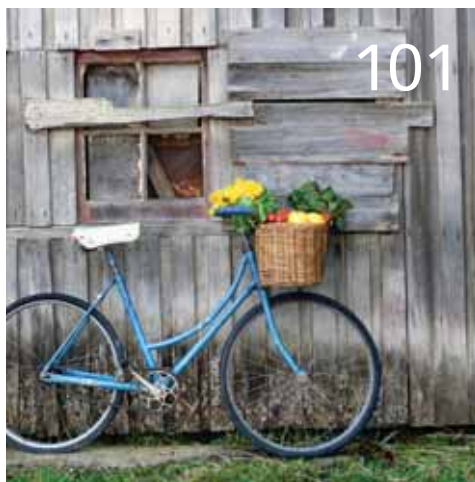
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Our recipe descriptions

- V** Suitable for vegetarians
- 🧊** You can freeze it
- ❄️** Not suitable for freezing
- Easy** Simple recipes even beginners can make
- A little effort** These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry
- More of a challenge** Recipes aimed at experienced cooks
- Low fat** 12g or less per portion
- Low cal** 500 calories or less per main.
- Superhealthy** Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.
- Good for you** Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
- Heart healthy** Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids
- 1 of 5-a-day** The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving
- Vit C Iron Omega-3 Calcium Folate Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for this symbol:

- P** contains pork
- 🍷** contains alcohol

Your say

We love to hear from you!



SPECIAL OCCASIONS

This month's issue was very special, as you covered all aspects of Valentine's Day, from recipes to gifts. I really liked the gift idea section (*Gifts of love*, February 2013)

as it was a compilation of gifts that food lovers would enjoy. Every month I try out the recipes from the magazine, and my family absolutely loves them. Keep up the good work *BBC Good Food ME*. I'll be waiting for the next edition.

Amrita Chachara

LOVE FOR FOOD

I love the cover of this month's magazine, and what I love even more is how easy it was to make the Sweetheart chocolate and hazelnut sandwich recipe



(*Love is... good food!* February 2013). It was a more refined and delicious version of the simple French toast, which I usually make with chocolate hazelnut spread anyway. I tried it as soon as I got a copy of the magazine, and then made it again on Valentine's Day for my husband. My husband and I love cooking, and he loves to experiment with Chinese cuisine. He found great inspiration in the Chinese recipe feature (*Simple, satisfying Chinese*, February 2013), as he learnt a lot on flavouring Chinese dishes. He has yet to pick up the five-spice powder to cook the Five-spice beef and sugar snap noodles. Thank you *BBC Good Food ME* for getting us on



Win!

The writer of the Star Letter will win a **Dhs1,000 voucher from @home**, South Africa's leading homeware store. @home offers a glamorous and fashionable range of products for the entire home, including the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, dining, and living room, as well as general home décor items, appliances and office accessories. Their contemporary, fresh, and innovative products are both practical and aesthetically designed. @home stores are located in Dubai at Mercato Mall, Ibn Battuta Mall, Dubai Marina Mall, The Dubai Mall and Mall of the Emirates; in Abu Dhabi at Al Wahda mall; and at Al Hamra Mall in Ras Al Khaimah.



@home
THE HOMEWARE STORE

Star Letter

NEW HOME, NEW READ

I had to write in and tell the team how much I appreciate and thoroughly enjoy reading the magazine every month. I recently moved to Dubai from South Africa, and as everyone already knows, relocating to a new country is quite an issue when you're leaving your favorite things behind, your local foodie magazine included. I threw myself right in when I moved here, by joining the Food Club and enjoy all the masterclasses that I get to

visit as a member. I love the innovative recipes every month and can't wait to try some of the dishes in this month's issue. My favourite way to unwind is by buying your monthly issue, and sitting down with a cuppa while the kids are at school. My me-time is bliss!

Dominique Smalberger



track for Valentine's Day. Looking forward to more appetising reads in the upcoming months.

Tehzeeb Huda Ahmed

VALENTINE'S DAY SORTED

I picked up this month's issue as I desperately needed to find a romantic restaurant to take my wife to. I always rely on *BBC Good Food ME*, as I know there will be some restaurant promotion or



the other (*Flavours of the month*, February 2013). After reading the Date-night dining options in the Tried and Tasted section, I decided I would treat my wife to dinner on Bateaux Dubai. We visited the cruise before for high tea, and absolutely loved it. The glass boat, with views of the creek and the beautiful sky – it was just amazing! I also picked up the Le Creuset stoneware berry pot, which I found in the gift guide (*Gifts of Love*, February 2013), as my wife loves making jams and preserves. We had a great Valentine's Day this year, and it was all thanks to you, *BBC Good Food ME*!

Chris D'mello

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts, views and comments.



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Follow us on Pinterest: [bbcgoodfoodme](https://www.pinterest.com/bbcgoodfoodme)

Or, you could write to us at:
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We asked you...

Facebook poll

Which of these practices do you most regularly follow to do your bit for sustainability?

60% Eat local produce

20% Use seasonal ingredients

10% Choose sustainable seafood

10% Grown your own fruit and veg



OUR LOOK HAS CHANGED
OUR OUTLOOK REMAINS THE SAME



EXOTIC HOME INTERIORS

Yesterday



Today

As we evolve, so do the things we love. Our new logo symbolises this belief while still staying true to the values that make us who we are.

**The same reassuring quality, now in a new look.
Marina Home.**



Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Traders Vics

Chez Sushi



Hugo café



HEALTHY TREAT ALERT!

Now you can have your cupcake and eat it too! The recently-launched Skinny Genie bakery in Al Quoz offers freshly baked 100 per cent gluten-free cupcakes, using unrefined sugar, natural, organic ingredients and no preservatives. We can vouch for the double dark chocolate and peanut cupcake – moist and delicious! Call 800-SKINNY.



This just in:

The gorgeous premium velvet Flower box filled with a selection of 150 chocolates and truffles is the ultimate gift for Mother's Day. Use it to stash away your jewellery, once the sweets have been devoured. Dhs1,150, at Forrey and Galland.

DINE IN THE CITY

The latest restaurant openings in town

★ With the opening of Hugo Café, on the first floor of Palm Strip Mall, you no longer have to visit a fine-dining restaurant to feast on French-Vietnamese cuisine. A hub for poets, musicians, and artists – they have a wide selection of books, poems and audio materials – the café offers delicious food offerings such as homemade French onion soup, and prawn coconut red curry with steamed jasmine rice. Call 04-3863100.

★ Customise your own sushi roll at Chez Sushi by Sho Cho, Wasl Square, by choosing from a selection of fresh ingredients such as brown or white rice, teriyaki, seafood, vegetables and dressings. Those who prefer signature rolls can try the prawn tempura and spicy tuna, or a salmon bento box. Call 800-78744.

★ Jazz at PizzaExpress – the popular concept from London, where artists such as Norah Jones made her European debut, and Jamie Cullum was scouted – has made its way to our shores, with its opening near the Moevenpick at Jumeirah Lake Towers. Enjoy the regular Pizza Express menu while enjoying tunes played by live jazz bands, at this hip venue. Call 04-4416342.

★ The world's highest theatre club, The Act Dubai, is opening this month at the Shangri La, Dubai. Located on the 42 and 43 floor of the hotel, guests can enjoy a selection of Peruvian dishes and refreshing cocktails, while watching musical and performance acts from the banquet booths. shangri-la.com.

“It’s my belief that cooking is a craft. I think that you can push it into the realm of art, but it starts with craft, an understanding of materials, and an understanding of where foods are grown.”

– Tom Colicchio, American celebrity chef.



SMART TECHNOLOGY

Looking for last minute discount at restaurants, while out and about? The newly launched ‘Deals nearby you’ app allows you to get enticing discounts (a minimum of five per cent), using GPS technology, to find deals in the area you’re in. It’s a great alternative to the numerous discount emails that clog up inboxes! Available for iPhone and Android mobile users.



THE RIGHT CHOICE

Seafood lovers no longer have to dine at restaurants where only a few sustainable seafood options are available. Check out Sea Mood restaurant, located in Satwa, for a variety of delicious seafood dishes using good quality, sustainable seafood, selected according to the ‘Choose Wisely’ campaign. Call 04-3857977.



Not-so-perfect packaging

According to a recent report revealed by an international group of nutritionists at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), calories projected on packaging of products are inaccurate, as they can often underestimate the energy content of processed foods, and do not take into account the digested value of calories – which can be as much as 50 per cent higher than the calorific value of the product’s ingredients

when raw. Something to think about, the next time you’re reaching out for a pack of canned vegetables, in the supermarket aisle!

TOP OF THE CHARTS

The World’s 50 best restaurants 2013 will be announced on April 29 at Guildhall in London, and we can’t wait to find out if any of the UAE establishments will make the cut! Visit theworlds50best.com for more information, or watch the live stream on finedininglovers.com.

FRESH, FRUITY GOODNESS

Need a refreshing smoothie to get through the day? Italian frozen yoghurt and smoothie outlet Smooch (located at the J3 mall on Al Wasl Road), has collaborated with lifestyle consultants The Wellness Brothers, to offer nutritious, low-fat and low-calorie smoothies, loaded with live probiotics, and sweetened with natural coconut palm sugar. We can’t wait to try the Chocolate smoochie made with raw organic cacao, chia seeds, cashew nuts and a special protein blend! Visit facebook.com/smoochuae for more information.





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When it comes to bestsellers, Pierre Gagnaire has many. Enter his kaleidoscopic world by joining us at the Michelin-starred maestro's Literary Lunch. Enjoy tasters of some of Reflets' finest dishes, while you learn about his colourful life and career. Find out about his new book '175 Home Recipes with a Twist' and engage in an exclusive Q&A session.

Wednesday 6th March 2013, 12.30pm – 2.30pm

AED 230 per person – including lunch and a welcome drink

2nd - 7th March

Pierre Gagnaire will be cooking dinner daily in the restaurant.

Pierre Gagnaire's Literary Lunch is part of the 5th Emirates Airline Festival of Literature, 5th - 9th March 2013.

See emirateslitfest.com for details and tickets.

Reflets par Pierre Gagnaire, InterContinental Dubai Festival City
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Visit diningdfc.com

REFLETS
par Pierre Gagnaire

Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, foodie accessories, home décor and more.



We can't decide whether we want to use this gorgeous cup and saucer or simply admire its intricate design. Dhs250, at **SAUCE GIFTS**.

These adorable Made with Love measuring spoons, decorated with cupcake handles and heart designs, are ideal for a Mother's day gift. Dhs119, at **LAKELAND**.



Forget Easter bunnies, this delicious candy hamper filled with Willy Wonka candy, an adorable teddy bear, sugar free mints and collectible crystal glass figurines with chocolates and praline bouquets makes an ideal Easter gift. Dhs200, at **CANDELITE**.



These funky superman coasters are a must for any superhero fan's coffee table. Dhs35 for a set of four, at **VIRGIN MEGASTORE**.

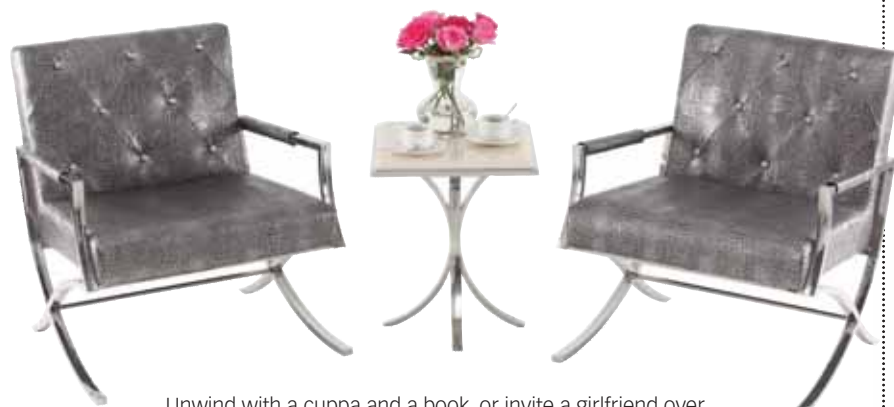
The quirky Propaganda Pick a tooth toothpick holder will definitely induce some after-dinner laughs. Dhs48, at **WAMLI.COM**.



Pack your little man's lunch in this toolkit box, or use it to store cookies – either way, it's a cutie! Dhs98, at **HARVEST HOME**



Treat yourself to this Breakfast in bed set, which includes a packet of loose leaf black tea, a cookbook and a mesh ball tea infuser, or give it to mum for Mother's Day. From Dhs102, at **MILK AND HONEY**.



Unwind with a cuppa and a book, or invite a girlfriend over for croissants and coffee – there's no better way to show off this Empire tea table set. Dhs2,450, at **HOME CENTRE**.

On test: Hand blenders

Essential home gadgets reviewed.



Tefal Prepline blender

If you're the type of person who likes to make homemade soups, delicious ice-cream shakes and healthy smoothies, but never gets around to it, then the Tefal Prepline blender could be the ultimate solution for your gastronomic goals. The snazzy, easy-to-assemble, versatile and dishwasher-friendly blender has an ergonomically designed handle, two speed settings, and a large 800ml goblet, an 800ml mini-chopper with child-safety system and stainless steel multi-whisk.

What we liked: Not only can the blender be used to make an impressive array of dishes, snacks and drinks, but it offers fuss-free cleaning for those pressed for time. Part of Tefal's food processing range, the Tefal Prepline comes with a whole host of accessories, to enhance the variety of what you make and the speed at which it can be made – the perfect product for a

budding master chef. As well as the versatility offered, the Prepline's Silence plus feature lives up to its promise of being quiet, which made the whole experience of using it much more enjoyable.

What we didn't like: If you don't have a dishwasher, this can be quite fiddly to clean as any other hand-held blender.

To buy: Dhs269, available at Spinneys and other leading supermarkets.

User tip

Choose the speed settings carefully, as you cannot stop and reverse in between.



Moulinex slim force DD855

A stylish hand-blender that is easy to use for multiple purposes is just what every kitchen needs! Luckily, the Moulinex slim force – which uses an Active flow technology and has four blades – is not only appealing to look at, but also fulfils the requirements of multi-tasking, with its special features and extra tools, including a 450ml chopper, metal whisk, 800ml goblet, and potato masher.

What we liked: The great thing about hand blenders, especially for making soups, is that you can simply simmer ingredients on the stove for a few seconds and then allow the hand blender to work its magic with the click of a button. The speed includes '+1' and 'turbo' options, with the turbo being extremely quick – thinning the soup in just less than two minutes, and the '+1' option being good for anything that needs a bit more time to be blended. The hand blender is quite sturdy, even when the chopper is being used. The potato masher enabled my mashed

potatoes to be creamy and fluffy – and the box even had a simple recipe to follow. Easy to assemble, and us, it's the sort of product that even kids can use – under supervision of course.

What we didn't like: The cable for the hand blender was not very long – this can be quite tricky for people who don't have an electric outlet in a convenient location on the kitchen counter.

To buy: Dhs346, at all leading hypermarkets and electronic stores.

User tip

It's quite a powerful blender, so can be used for blitzing fruit and veg direct from the freezer.

Bamix hand blender (Swissline-Superbox model)

The reliable hand blender is very versatile and easy to use, providing consistent results at all times. Manufactured in Switzerland, the blender features a range of accessories including a grater, mince beater, whisk, beater and processor, to suit all kinds of cooking needs. The minimalist design of the blender stand makes it look good on any countertop.

What we liked: The hand blender is an efficient alternative to a regular blender, in terms of performance, but is more convenient to use. Even when it comes down to washing, it only takes a few seconds, as opposed to a bigger blender that needs a thorough wash. Although the blades are not that sharp, when combined with the power of the heavy-duty motor, it blends fruits and vegetables completely in a just a few minutes – ideal for quick, healthy smoothies for weekday mornings. It's also very quiet when in use, which is great, especially if you want to get ahead in the kitchen while the kids are asleep. This all-in-one kitchen tool also comes in handy for crushing ice for cocktails. Although it is quite big, with multiple attachments, it is designed to not occupy too much space, making it ideal for small apartment kitchens.

What we didn't like: It isn't convenient for blending anything in bulk as the jar is quite small, so we had to blend things in batches for family-sized requirements.

To buy: Dhs1,490, at Tavola.

User tip

Don't ever try to change the blades while the blender is plugged in.



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On my bookshelf. . .



★ We ask the pros to tell us about the cookbook

they can't live without.

Jamie Robertson, Head Chef at Gaucho

I'm a big fan of *Latin Evolution* (Lake Isle Press) by Jose Garces. Jose Garces was first brought to my attention in 2008, and since then I've spent a lot of time researching his style of food. When I saw he had written his first book, I bought it straightaway. I believe his cooking philosophy matches my own – experimenting with new ingredients and using innovative techniques whilst still staying true to the Latin American style.

Watch this:

★ **Nigella Kitchen,** at various times on *Food Network*



Her glossy locks and charm make her appealing, but that isn't the only reason to tune in to this show. Kitchen goddess Nigella Lawson cooks up quick and enticing dishes in a way that makes everything seem just a tad more do-able. With a great emphasis on cooking with easy-to-find ingredients, Nigella makes your mouth water as she cooks, while answering questions sent in by home cooks.



Download this:

★ **Calorie counter,** Free for I-phone, I-pad, and Android phones.

Get started on this app by filling in your details

– weight, height, age – and it automatically suggests a recommended goal weight and daily calorie budget according to your Body mass index. Fill in your journal with your daily food intake and exercise activities, to keep track of your progress on a bar chart. The app also offers recipes and tips, making it a fab resource for sticking to health goals.

Culina-reads

Reviews of the latest cookbooks, food shows and mobile apps.



★ **Fantastico! Modern Italian Food** (Kyle books) By Gino D'Acampo

Who doesn't love to toss up a bit of pasta, or an Italian-style salad every now and then? But, if you want to learn how to recreate the authentic flavours – it's easier than you think – then this book is for you. Camera-friendly chef and author Gino opens with an introduction that sets the tone of this award-winning, best-selling book – straightforward, fuss-free and informal – laying a clear emphasis on his rules of cooking. These include focusing on a high quality of ingredients, and always cooking solo – “cooking should be a selfish and relaxing experience,” he says. Relaxing it will be, with these minimum-effort Modern Italian recipes aimed at non-Italian cooks, that range from a tuna and mixed bean salad, to double chocolate mousse, and everything in between. The chapters are divided on the basis of both ingredients (with quirky names like ‘Sunshine and salads’ and ‘Legs and feathers’) as well as situations, such as ‘Late

breakfast’ and ‘Aperitivo and antipasti’, and each comes with its own set of tips from Gino. Our favourite part is the last chapter, ‘Say it with food’, in which he compiles a selection of recipes for specific people or moments, as a way of expressing oneself. That and the ‘First aid for food’ page, where he shares handy hints (what to do with overripe avocados, for example), are reason enough to buy it!

Dhs94, available at Jashanmal



Moro The Cookbook (Edbury Press) By Sam and Sam Clark

Well-loved London restaurateurs Sam and Sam Clark responded to their fans' (Nigella Lawson counts herself as one) pleas for recipes with

this cookbook, a treasure trove of their secrets of their food. Offering a rare insight into Mediterranean cuisine – but not as we know it, rather the lesser known reaches of the Mediterranean across Spain and North Africa – the husband-wife duo capture the spices, flavours, and culinary traditions of the region beautifully in this book. Complete with vintage-style illustrations, you will find recipes for everything from Baba ghanouj and Harira, to Chorizo salad and Churros, the seemingly disparate dishes connected by the saffron-cinnamon link they have discovered. It isn't just a compilation of some of the best dishes from their Moro restaurant, which specialises in the same Arabic, Hispanic and Levant-inspired dishes featured in the book, but also a journey you are taken along on.

Dhs98, available from Jashanmal books



Street Food of India (IB Tauris) By Sephi Bergerson

Food lovers travel – partly to discover new places but mainly to discover new tastes and foods. The most enthusiastic know, however, that the heart of a culture lies in its street foods – whether it's an empanada in Mexico City, a fish taco in San Francisco, a box of frites and mustard in Paris or a bowl of Pho in Hanoi. But nowhere does such an abundance of delicious street food as India and this book is photographer Bergerson's celebration of everything tasty, from a sweet lassi in Jaipur to an earthenware pot of chai anywhere. Many of these snacks you'll have eaten in Dubai's souks, but street food should be eaten on the street, not in a food court or canteen – a cornucopia of samosas, pakoras, idlis, bhel puri, bhature, masala dosa and so much more. As well as photos that will inspire you to plan a trip to India, the book contains recipes to the 50 'greatest' Indian snacks to make at home. Highly recommended!

\$28 (Dhs102), available from amazon.com



Here to help

Our expert chef Andy Campbell offers practical advice to tackle all your cooking dilemmas.

Q I prefer eating brown rice because it's healthier, but I never seem to get it right when I'm cooking, as it takes longer to cook than white rice. Do you have a foolproof method?

A. When making brown rice, wash 1 cup of rice in running water for 30 seconds in a colander. Boil 12 cups of water, add the rice and cook uncovered for 30 minutes. Strain the rice in a colander in the sink for 10 seconds, return to the pan and cover with a lid for 10 minutes and allow to steam. Add a knob of butter and season with salt.



Q What's the difference between a sorbet and a granita? Can I make granita at home without any special equipment?

A. Frozen ices fall into two categories. Sorbets are stirred often during freezing, adding air to lighten and soften the texture of the finished product. Sorbets have a smoother and softer texture to granitas – which are grainier and have large ice particles. Granitas are simple to make. One of my favourites is a coffee granita. All you need to do is boil 150g caster sugar with 250ml water for about 3 minutes until a syrup is formed; Add six shots of espresso and allow to cool, then pour into a metal tray and freeze for two-three hours. Use a fork to

mix the crystals from the edges and the liquid centre, repeat this process several times until the granita is frozen and has a granular texture.

Q I'd like to freeze baked muffins and muffin batter to use later. What's the best way to store them?

A. When cooled, cooked muffins can be wrapped in foil and frozen for up to three months. To reheat, either defrost at room temperature, microwave or bake in the foil in a pre heated oven at 180C for about 10-15 minutes. With uncooked batter, you can freeze in the tray first so it takes shape, then wrap the frozen batter muffins individually and re-freeze. Add another 10-12 minutes cooking time when cooking from frozen.

Q How can I avoid the oily taste on tempura vegetables and prawns?

A. I use a batter made of half rice flour and half plain flour, an egg and very cold fizzy mineral water to bind. Mix the batter lightly – a few lumps are good! Make sure to keep the batter over a bowl of ice to keep it very cold once you have mixed it. Heat fresh cooking oil at 190C and cook the tempura in batches of no more than six pieces. Drain excess oil on kitchen paper and season with sea salt. Allow the oil to cool down before cooking the next batch. Serve immediately.

Q I often find half and half cream in recipes, but can't find it in stores. Can I make it at home?

A. Making half and half cream is easier than you think! It can be used as an alternative to heavy cream for baking and finishing certain

sauces. Add three parts full-fat milk to one part whipping cream and mix well. Voila!

Q I love cooking with pumpkins and know that pumpkin seeds are healthy. What are the ways in which I can make use of them?

A. Roasting them is an obvious way – you can sprinkle the roasted pumpkin seeds over breakfast cereals and salads. Or, you could try making pumpkin seed oil – it has a nutty taste and is rich in vitamins, minerals and unsaturated fatty acids. Two and a half kilos of seeds produce 1 litre of oil. Set your oven at 60C, wash the seeds and remove any remaining fibrous material still attached, dry well. Roast the seeds until they turn a nutty light brown colour. Press the seeds in a mortar and pestle to release the oil, strain and put in a bottle. You can keep the oil for up to 4 weeks in the fridge.



Andy's ingredient of the month

Hard shelled UAE or Oman crab from the Deira fish market. Make sure the crab has plenty of claw meat as well. Crab meat tastes great in pasta with chilli, lime and olive oil, or simply as crab cakes.

Ask us & win!

Got a cooking question you need answered? send your culinary query to feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com and you could be in with a chance to win a dinner voucher for two, worth dhs370, for the Monday night Spice Route Journey offer at Address Dubai Marina. Spice Route Journey features curries and other traditional delicacies from around the Indian subcontinent. To find out more about Chef Andy, visit chefandycampbell.com.

*Winner will be chosen on a random basis.



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A month of celebrations

Whether it's International Women's Day or Good Friday, Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach gives you the opportunity to celebrate something throughout March, with their trademark French sophistication and a good dose of fun.



■ Girl power

International Women's Day Friday Brunch at A.O.C. French Brasserie – 8 March, 1:00pm-4:00pm

International Women's Day celebrates the achievements of women around the world and you can too, with a special Friday brunch at A.O.C. French Brasserie. Relax on the outdoor terrace and enjoy the fresh sea breeze or opt for an indoor table to stay closer to the tasty selection of French and international dishes. Specialties for the day include the famous seafood and sushi counters, roast Prime Rib of beef, selection of pâtés and terrines, as well as popular treats from the dessert station. Children have a dedicated child-sized buffet with a play area, while live entertainment will set the mood for celebration.

Dhs220 for Grand Buffet and soft beverages; Dhs310 for Grand buffet and selected beverages; Dhs480 for Bubbly Brunch



■ Irish extravaganza

St. Patrick's Day at The Hub – 15-23 March, 4:00pm-1:00am

Don your green and shamrocks and get into the jovial spirit of St. Patrick's Day at Irish themed pub, The Hub, which is designed to resemble an authentic bar in the docklands area of an Irish city. With specials available all week from March 15-23, you can enjoy Irish food and drinks, from a pint of black gold, to dishes like cottage pie and Irish stew. Sports fans can get their dose of action with the final of the Six Nations rugby tournament on March 16 and the Dubai International Horse Fair on March 21-23, being broadcast live on big screens.



■ A treat for Mum

Mother's Day at A.O.C. French Brasserie – 21 March, 7:00pm-11:30pm

If you want to indulge your mother, look no further than the lavish seafood spread at the Mother's Day buffet dinner in A.O.C. French Brasserie. From crabs, mussels, clams, and lobsters to sushi and an oyster counter, there is a wide selection of seafood, as well as sumptuous desserts to end with.

Dhs220 for Grand Buffet and soft beverages; Dhs310 for Grand buffet and selected beverages



■ Family fun

Good Friday Easter Brunch at A.O.C. French Brasserie – 29 March, 1:00pm-4:00pm

Celebrate Good Friday with the family-friendly brunch at A.O.C. French Brasserie, where a generous selection of fresh fish and seafood will be on offer, as will celebratory live entertainment. Little ones can take delight in a dedicated 'kids corner' which will offer a child-sized buffet, play area with face painting and Easter egg hunt.

Dhs220 for Grand Buffet and soft beverages; Dhs310 for Grand buffet and selected beverages; Dhs480 for Bubbly Brunch

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Tried & tasted

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Brunch



Where: Imperium, Jumeirah Zabeel Saray

What's it like: Offering a refreshing change from the excesses of typical Dubai brunches, the French-themed one at Imperium is a well and truly civilised way to enjoy a Friday afternoon. The grandiose décor, with its vaulted ceilings, oversized chandeliers and Renaissance-style gilt-edged detail provides an elegant ambience, although in the present alfresco-perfect weather, you are best off booking a table in the more relaxed outdoor terrace. Here, a talented quartet – complete with beret-wearing accordion player – provide all the live entertainment you need (there's not a contortionist in sight!).

The buffet is wide and varied, with a slant towards bistro-style offerings including a variety of terrines, roasts and other carvery items, a wide array of cheeses, plus oysters and plenty of salads. What was a stand-out for me, however, was the fresh seafood barbecue area where melt-in-the-mouth lobsters and delicious moules marinières were being served to order. If the buffet doesn't offer enough choice for you, there's also an à la carte option for the mains, which includes roast chicken, pork belly, and an excellent risotto with chanterelle mushrooms. It will be easy to overdo the mains, but you will be sorry if you don't leave room for dessert – the offerings include authentic French specialties such as Bugnes with orange blossom, Engadine tart and Savarins, that aren't that commonly available. Washed down with the finest bubbly or beverages, it makes for a decadent experience – in a good way. For those who want to continue, the after-party venue is Voda bar next door, which offers half-price drinks, or if you'd prefer a mellow end to the day, having a go at the giant chess board in the hotel gardens is perfect!

If you want to go: From Dhs275 per person (soft drinks), Dhs550 for bubbly package. Call 04-4530444.

Best for:

A special occasion celebration in style

- Sudeshna Ghosh



Where: Spectrum on One, Fairmont Dubai

What it's like: When it comes to decadent Friday brunches, there's plenty of choices in our city. However, when it comes to customisation of dishes, and variety of cuisines with themes to match each, then Spectrum on One's brunch is the place to be!

As soon as we entered the restaurant, we were given a guided tour of the different live cooking stations which allowed me to make a mental note of my picks – the Japanese station and cheese room! The restaurant was redolent with the aromas of spices from various cuisines. We started our meal with eggs Benedict and roasted vegetables (artichokes, mushrooms, peppers) – which were packed with flavour in every morsel – all washed down with bubbly, naturally. The Japanese station was our next stop and we couldn't wait to try out the sake, maki rolls, tempura selection with prawns, vegetables and shrimp, and teppanyaki – all of which were made to perfection. The Asian station offers everything from fresh Thai salads to freshly made dim sum. The brunch also offers an outstanding selection of Mexican, Indian and a roast station for traditional English offerings such as roasted leg of lamb, Yorkshire puddings and slow-cooked beef. My dining partner tried the lamb, and was amazed at how succulent the meat was. I decided to make my way to the fresh seafood station to try the steamed lobsters and fresh oysters, which I splashed with hot sauce and lemon, before devouring in minutes. For dessert, I'd had my eyes on the Eton mess – which has its own station! – and tried the lemon meringue with berries version, which turned out to be a fruity delight with a hint of citrus. Although full, we couldn't resist the sticky toffee pudding, so decided to share one – I can honestly claim it was one of the best I've ever tasted.

If you want to go: From Dhs345 per person (soft drinks), Dhs575 for bubbly brunch. Call 04-3325555.

- Nicola Monteath

Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.

✴ Italian indulgence

Black truffles, white truffles – we love them all! Prego's, Media Rotana has recently launched a limited edition menu, to celebrate the Black truffle festival in Norcia. Try signature truffle creations such as homemade ravioli and a mouth-watering rack of lamb.

Available daily, call 04-4350201.



Prego's, Media Rotana



✴ African culinary highlights

Go on a culinary journey through Africa, with the new menu at Tribes (located at The Fashion Dome, Mall of the Emirates), and feast on braised veal shank served with tomato ragout and crispy okra, or share a 1kg Wagyu flank-steak served with creamy Dauphinoise potato.

Available daily, call 04-3950663.

✴ Taste of Levant

Masterchef Joe Barza is heading to Awtar, Grand Hyatt Dubai to cook some of his signature Lebanese dishes. Guests can enjoy a special three-course set menu featuring lamb kebab, vine leaves, and rice kunafa.

Available at Dhs395 per head, call 04-3172222.

✴ Dark delights

Celebrate Earth hour by experiencing dinner in the dark at Nineteen, The Address Montgomerie Dubai. The meal begins with a welcome drink in the lounge, before you make your way to a pitch-black dining room to indulge in a surprise menu that will trigger your senses.

Available on March 23, from Dhs495 per head.

Call 04-3905600.

✴ Stylish Chinese

If you love Cantonese food, then check out the new menu at award-winning Hakkasan Dubai. It includes dishes using locally sourced ingredients, and boasts culinary highlights such as prawns and taro in clay pot with yellow bean sauce, and old favourites with twists, such as the Wagyu beef in Chinese five spice sauce.

Available daily. Call 04-3848484.

✴ Party like the Irish

- Enjoy Irish food and drinks this St. Patrick's day at Dubliners, Le Meridien Dubai with a hearty buffet of traditional Irish dishes such as shepherd's pie.

Available on March 17, from Dhs170 per head (inclusive of two drinks). Call 04-7022508.

- Those living in Abu Dhabi, can head to Le Meridien Abu Dhabi to try out a selection of Irish hops and barbecue meats and seafood, while dancing the night away to music from the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

Available on March 15 and 16, call 02- 6446666.

✴ Mother's Day special

Grab the family, and treat your mother to a special three-course set menu dinner at Salt, Rixos The Palm Dubai, where you can savour fresh Mediterranean seafood dishes.

Available on March 21, from Dhs275 per head, and free for mothers (only available for a table of four guests). Call 04-4575555.



✴ Seasonal menu

Make the most of the weather and all good things that come with it, such as limited edition winter menus, by dining at Ronda Locatelli, Atlantis The Palm, and trying out dishes from 'Giorgio's winter signatures menu' such as black truffles with bean and potato salad with green beans, potatoes, shallot dressing and black winter truffle, and comfort food including pumpkin pizza topped with mozzarella, burrata cheese and black winter truffle, served hot from a traditional brick oven.

Available daily until mid March. Call 04-4262626.



✧ Smart deal

If you're anywhere close to The One in Jumeirah or Khalidiya, Abu Dhabi, or perhaps require a break from furniture shopping, head to the Deli to avail their two-for-one price main course offer on dishes including slow braised lamb shank and a delightful parmesan crusted chicken.

Available daily from March 10 onwards. Call 02-6816500 and 04-3456687.

Easter celebrations

✧ Spice Island, Crowne Plaza Dubai-Deira

Grab a plate and try over 200 dishes at this extravagant Easter brunch that offers dishes from cuisines including Thai, Japanese, Mongolian, Italian and French. If you aren't sure what to begin with, we suggest the roast turkey and grilled salmon, while the kids can treat themselves to the Easter cupcake collection before joining the Easter egg hunt.

Available on March 31, Dhs299 per head; Dhs99 for children aged six-12. Call 800116000.

✧ Picante, Four Points By Sheraton

Celebrate Easter the Portuguese way, with an unlimited selection of seafood and dishes including Baked cod with potatoes and cream. Once you quell your hunger, try the scrumptious dessert Arroz doce (Sweet rice). Kids can enjoy activities such as cookie baking and egg painting.

Available on March 31, from Dhs200 per head; kids aged between six-12 eat for half price; and below six eat free. Call 04-3977444.

✧ Wraps Café, Towers Rotana Dubai

Treat yourself and loves ones to Easter-themed chocolates, cakes and treats from the Easter goodie sale. Available from March 24, call 04-3122202.



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Date: 16 March 2013

Time: 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Special price: AED 220 including soft beverages

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Shop **sustainable,** **eat** sustainable!

Shopping for sustainable food products in the UAE just got a whole lot easier!

Sustainability in food is a rapidly growing trend in the region whether it's in supermarkets, restaurants or homes. Awareness of the importance of eating local, seasonal, fresh and organic produce is growing, as is the availability of such products in retail outlets. Here is a list of where you can find sustainable products for your kitchen and home, in the UAE:

Ripe markets and store

This fresh, local and organic fruit and vegetable market is already popular with residents within the UAE. With a ripe market held at Le Gourmet Cafe & Restaurant in Jumeirah Beach Road on Fridays, The Courtyard, Al Quoz, on Saturdays, and Jones the Grocer in Abu Dhabi on Thursdays, as well as a shop located just off Al Manara road, there is no excuse not to stop by for your supply of local produce, and other sustainably produced food products. If you can't make it to the market, order your Ripe box online from ripeme.com.

Lulu hypermarkets

A wide range of local and organic produce sourced from farmers within the region is sold across the hypermarkets in the UAE – look for the 'local' label on the produce.

Carrefour outlets

The French multi-national retailer has a separate section where local, organic produce from the region is sold. These include vegetables such as cucumbers, peppers, potatoes and tomatoes, amongst others. Carrefour also sells sustainable seafood as part of the 'Choose Wisely' campaign – an Emirates Wildlife Society initiative.

Union Co-operative society

Known for offering local produce at affordable prices, this supermarket sells everything from tomatoes, onions and cucumbers to lettuce, cauliflowers, cherry tomatoes and sustainable seafood such as crab and prawns, all sourced from the UAE and Oman.

Greenheart organic farms

The company manages several farms across the UAE and sells freshly harvested organic produce to residents in the new Dubai area, including Emirates living, Palm Jumeirah, Al Barsha and Arabian Ranches. All their produce is free from chemicals and pesticides, and a diverse range of vegetables is available for home delivery. Greenheart has also collaborated with NKDpizza to create two pizzas and three fresh salads using local produce. Place your order for a box of fresh produce online on greenheartuae.com.

Blue Planet Organic People

This organic and natural store located in Jumeirah Lake Towers provides food products and ingredients free from artificial flavours, colours, sweeteners, preservatives and hydrogenated fats. A selection of fair trade and certified organic and natural home décor, lifestyle products and home care products are also available. Their online store offers a range of groceries, fresh produce including fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy and beverages, with free delivery in Dubai on Wednesdays for purchases over Dh80. They have also introduced a weekly farmers' market in JLT on Fridays. Visit blueplanetgreenpeople.com.

The Change Initiative

The one-stop shop on Sheikh Zayed Road is ideal for anyone looking for sustainable lifestyle products, from eco-friendly household goods and food products to fashion accessories. It is also home to The Taste Initiative café that offers food cooked using sustainable ingredients. Visit thechangeinitiative.com.

Organic Foods & Cafe

The pioneer of organic eating in the UAE, this supermarket may stock a lot of foodstuff flown in from halfway around the world, but have started stocking more and more local produce of late, as the supplies from local farms grow. With various locations around UAE, including the Greens, Shaikh Zayed Road, Jumeirah and Masdar city in Abu Dhabi, they also have on-site cafés providing organic cuisine. Visit organicfoodsandcafe.com.

Raw Coffee

This 100 per cent ethically traded, fair trade certified and organic UAE-made coffee is available from their roastery in a warehouse in Al Quoz, where you can enjoy a freshly brewed cup. Visit www.rawcoffeecompany.com. ☕



For more information, contact us at 04-4350201, fb.media@rotana.com

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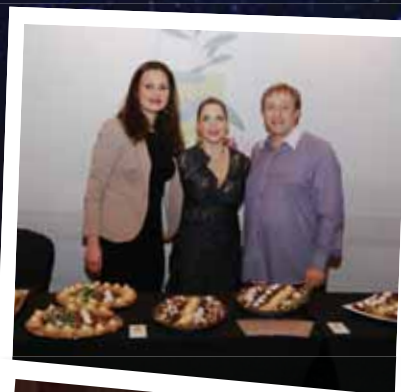
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Awards special

- * All the winners – inside
- * What guests ate, wore, and said
- * Chef of the year cook-off details





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Introduction

The 3rd annual BBC Good Food Middle East awards ended with a bang, with a glamorous gala event on January 30, 2013 at the Ritz Carlton DIFC. A celebration of the best restaurants and food brands in the UAE, the awards recognised winners in 30 categories, which were chosen after multiple rounds of consumer voting. The restaurants were divided into two main categories, Fine Dining and Casual Dining, while food and related brands were awarded under the Home Cooking-Ingredients, and Home Cooking-Accessories categories. In addition, the ever-popular Chef of the Year award was also a highlight, with many looking forward to learning who would take home the coveted recognition (turn to p42 to find out). This year's awards also saw the introduction of two new categories focused on Abu Dhabi, in a nod to the capital's burgeoning restaurant scene.

In a departure from previous years, the judging was limited to just the five most prestigious awards, which included the Best New Restaurant (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), Restaurant of the Year (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), and Chef of the Year. The five-member judging panel featured well-respected names from the country's culinary industry. The judges were:



Marianne Saulwick

Food critic, writer and hospitality lecturer, Marianne Saulwick is the Director of Industry Liaison for the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management and has previously owned and managed restaurants in Australia, co-founded a food festival, and been on the judging panel in one of Sydney's most prestigious fine dining awards.



Gregory Khellouf

French chef Gregory Khellouf has worked with several Michelin starred chefs in Europe, including Georges Blanc, Jean Georges, Alain Ducasse and Emile Young, as well as managed restaurants around the world. He ran the L'Atelier des Chefs cooking school in Dubai before setting up his own online gourmet food store, Chez Charles.



Chef Uwe Micheel

President of Emirates Culinary Guild and Director of Kitchens at Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek, Chef Uwe has over 30 years of experience in professional restaurants. He not only has numerous awards under his belt, but is also very active in promoting the UAE F&B industry.



Suzanne Hussein

Celebrity cookbook author and Arabic TV personality, Suzanne has gained worldwide popularity with her bestselling cookbook 'When Suzanne cooks', has hosted and been featured on TV cooking shows, and is a regular presenter at various international food events.



Marta Yanci

Founder and owner of bespoke catering company, Marta's Kitchen, Marta Yanci is a true home-grown food personality of the UAE, who regularly appears on Dubai One's cooking shows, and is also a popular food blogger.

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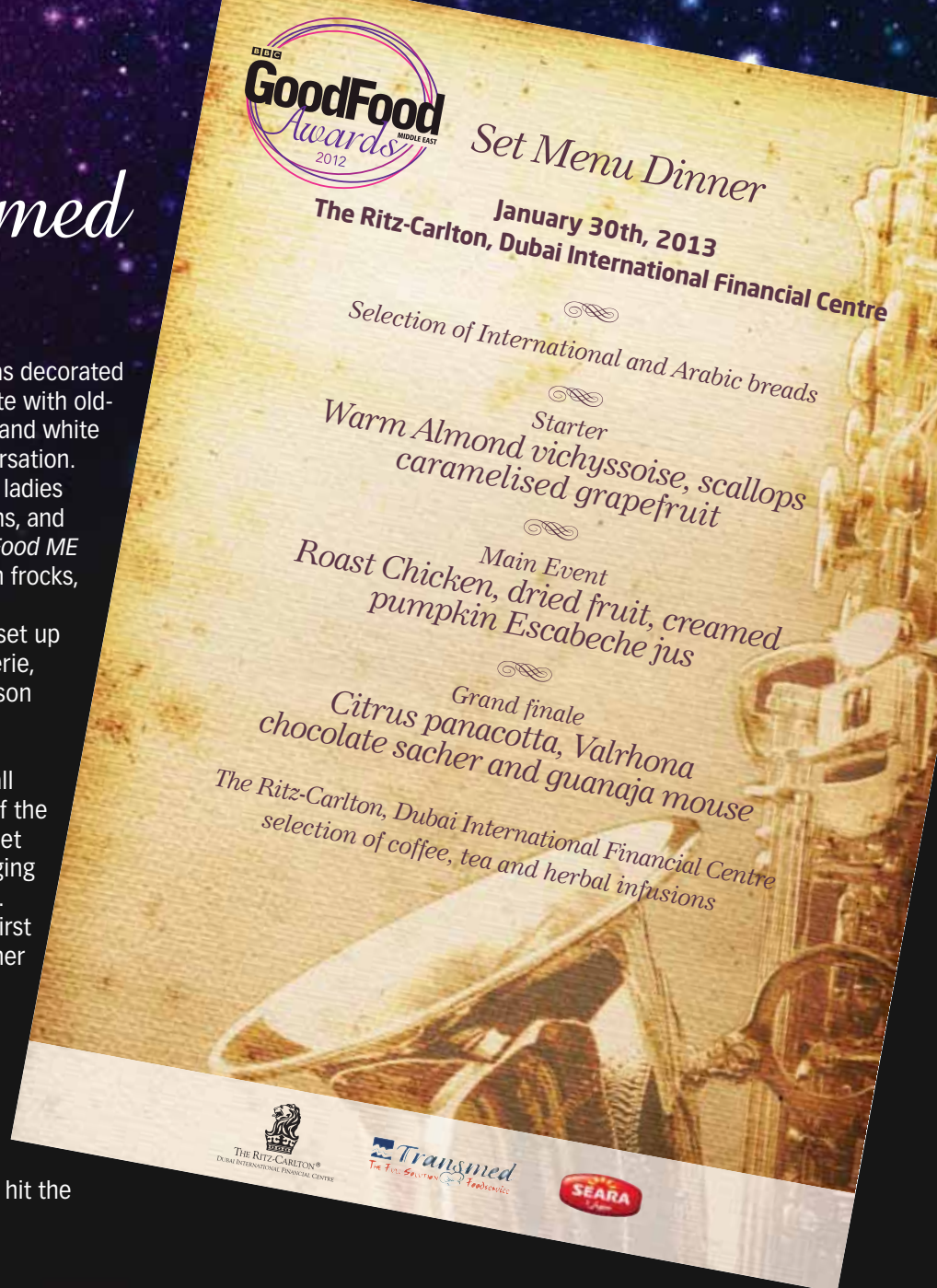
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A vintage-themed evening

Guests arrived to the pre-event reception which was decorated according to the jazz theme in retro style – complete with old-fashioned armoires, gilded hand mirrors, and black and white photos – to mingle over bubbly, canapés and conversation. Invitees turned out in their finest vintage gear, with ladies sporting everything from cocktail dresses and gowns, and men sticking mostly to smart suits. The *BBC Good Food ME* team looked their glamorous best dressed in stylish frocks, pearls and gloves!

After enjoying nibbles from the Tasting stations set up by Shangri-La Hotel Dubai, The Address Montgomerie, Sacla, RS olive oil, Elia Greek restaurant and Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Media City, guests proceeded into the Samaya ballroom, which was decked out in sophisticated black – with vintage hats placed at all the tables if guests wanted to get into the mood of the theme. The talented jazz duo from The Gramercy set the tone for the evening, with their repertoire ranging from Sinatra hits to Michael Buble's modern tunes.

MC Ben Jacobs took over soon after, welcoming first Dominic D Sousa, CEO of CPI Publishing and Publisher of *BBC Good Food ME*, on stage for a few words, after which, Editor Sudeshna gave a short speech and introduced the judges to the audience. Soon after, the announcement of the awards kicked off, while guests enjoyed a three-course dinner. The night ended on a high note with Dominic's CPI band taking over the stage after all the awards were handed out, and belting out hits, while guests hit the dance floor for a night of celebrations and revelry.



RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING



Best New Restaurant - Dubai

FINALISTS

- * **Alfie's** - Jumeirah Emirates Towers
- * **Roberto's** - DIFC
- * **The Farm** - Al Barari
- * **Titanic by Marco Pierre White** - Melia Dubai

AND THE WINNER IS...

Roberto's - DIFC

🍷 We work very hard to get these amazing awards. We hope to win the best restaurant in Dubai, perhaps next year! 🍷

– Andrea Mugavero

Best New Restaurant - Abu Dhabi

FINALISTS

- * **Beach House** - Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi
- * **Fairways International Restaurant** - Westin Abu Dhabi Golf Resort & Spa
- * **Le Deck** - Monte-Carlo Beach Club
- * **55th & 5th** - The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort

AND THE WINNER IS...

55th & 5th - The St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort

🍷 We are delighted that 55&5th, The Grill won in this category. The restaurant is our signature venue and continues to gain prominence in the capital, for the finest cuisine and bespoke service. 🍷

– John Pelling



RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING



Restaurant of the year - Dubai

FINALISTS

- * **La Petite Maison** - DIFC
- * **OKKU** - The H Hotel
- * **Table 9 by Nick and Scott** - Hilton Dubai Creek
- * **Zuma** - DIFC

AND THE WINNER IS... **Table 9 by Nick and Scott** - *Hilton Dubai Creek*

“It is a really great achievement for our young team to be named Restaurant of the Year. I am very proud to be a part of such a dynamic & ambitious group!”

– Nick Alvis

Restaurant of the year - Abu Dhabi

FINALISTS

- * **Agadir Westin Abu Dhabi Golf Resort & Spa**
- * **Bord Eau** - Shangri-La Hotel Qaryat Al Beri
- * **Finz** - Beach Rotana Abu Dhabi
- * **Hakkasan** - Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi

AND THE WINNER IS... **Bord Eau** - *Shangri-La Hotel Qaryat Al Beri*

“I can’t believe we won it! This is absolutely fantastic. Guests can expect authentic French dining at our restaurant, as we try to bring the region of Bordeaux to Abu Dhabi, and try not to compromise on anything.”

– Alexandre Pernetta





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RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING

Best European

FINALISTS

- * **Le Classique** - Emirates Golf Club
- * **Reflets Par Pierre Gagnaire** - InterContinental Dubai Festival City
- * **Traiteur** - Park Hyatt Dubai
- * **Villa Beach** - Jumeirah Beach Hotel

AND THE WINNER IS...

Traiteur - Park Hyatt Dubai

“This award means a lot to us! There’s great competition in the market, and it’s a bit of a gamble for us. Plans for the new year include a new menu, so watch out for it.”

– Roman Kardeshed



Best Asian

FINALISTS

- * **Zuma** - DIFC
- * **Hukama** - The Address Downtown Dubai
- * **Pai Thai** - Al Qasr hotel, Madinat Jumeirah
- * **Hakkasan** - Emirates Palace, Abu Dhabi

AND THE WINNER IS...

Zuma - DIFC

“It’s always a surprise to win an award, no matter how many times we win it. We’re opening in Financial Centre in Abu Dhabi soon, so that’s going to be a big move for us.”

– Ajaz Sheikh



RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING



Best Modern British

FINALISTS

- * **Table 9 by Nick and Scott** - Hilton Dubai Creek
- * **Rivington Grill** - Souk al Bahar
- * **The Ivy** - Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Dubai
- * **Rhodes Twenty10** - Le Royal Meridien Dubai Beach Resort & Spa

AND THE WINNER IS...

Rivington Grill - Souk al Bahar

“The Rivi is a household name, and offers everything that is absolutely British – which is why we knew we would win this category.”

– Annabelle Wilkins

Best Latin American

FINALISTS

- * **Pachanga** - Hilton Dubai Jumeirah
- * **Asado** - The Palace The Old Town
- * **La Parilla** - Jumeirah Beach Hotel
- * **Gaucha** - DIFC

AND THE WINNER IS...

Asado - The Palace The Old Town

“It’s great to win this award. The food served at our restaurant is very authentic and great. We won’t be making many changes to the menu this season, as it is working for us, and the guests love it!”

– Gabriel Stivala



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RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING

Best Indian

FINALISTS

- * **Chor Bazaar** - Movenpick Hotel Ibn Batutta Gate
- * **Amala** - Jumeirah Zabeel Saray
- * **Options By Sanjeev Kapoor** - Convention Tower Dubai World Trade Centre
- * **Asha's** - Wafi

AND THE WINNER IS...

**Options by Sanjeev Kapoor-
Convention Tower DWTC**

“Winning an award is always great. We recently opened an outlet at Movenpick Hotel, which is definitely going to be a hit as well, as it is the first Indian restaurant with an island kitchen and an Indian woman chef.”

– Sayeed Hussain



Best Middle Eastern

FINALISTS

- * **Al Hadheerah** - Bab Al Shams Desert Resort & Spa
- * **Ewaan** - The Palace Downtown
- * **Al Nafoorah** - Jumeirah Zabeel Saray
- * **Marrakech** - Shangri-La Hotel Dubai

AND THE WINNER IS...

**Al Hadheerah - Bab Al Shams
Desert Resort & Spa**

“It's a true honour for us to win this award for the second time in four years. This is the beginning of our next phase as we continue the journey of Arabian heritage cuisine.”

– Sunny Singh





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RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING

Best Steakhouse

FINALISTS

- * Ruth's Chris Steak House - The H Hotel
- * JW's Steakhouse - JW Marriott Dubai
- * 55th & 5th - St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort
- * MJ's - Al Qasr Hotel, Madinat Jumeirah

AND THE WINNER IS...

JW's Steakhouse - JW Marriott Dubai

“We won last year as well! It's amazing that we keep winning the award, and we hope we win it next year too.”

– Richard Bleakley.



Best Italian

FINALISTS

- * Bice - Hilton Dubai Jumeirah
- * Certo - Radisson Blu Dubai Media City
- * Medzo - Wafi
- * Ronda Locatelli - Atlantis, The Palm

AND THE WINNER IS...

Bice - Hilton Dubai Jumeirah

“We are so glad we won an award this year as well! At the restaurant, we make sure we keep the same quality and consistency in the food and service. We always change our menu according to the seasons, that way guests can expect fresh ingredients and delicious food at all times.”

– Piero Giglio

Best Brunch

FINALISTS

- * Al Qasr brunch - Al Qasr, Madinat Jumeirah Dubai
- * Bubbalicious - Westin Mina Seyahi Beach Resort & Marina
- * Jazz & Bubbles Friday Brunch at Talk - Movenpick Hotel Jumeirah Beach, Dubai
- * Traiteur - Park Hyatt Dubai

AND THE WINNER IS...

Al Qasr brunch - Al Qasr, Madinat Jumeirah Dubai

“We have an awesome team that work very hard. All the executive chefs make us win these awards, as it really is a combined effort. The brunch is one of the best in Dubai as we have more than 40 stations offering great food.”

– Abel Cabral



THE COOK-OFF



Four of the city's best chefs battled it out in a Mystery box cook-off to prove their culinary flair. Working under immense time and resource pressure, the chefs had 90 minutes to use all the ingredients in the Black box provided to them, to come up with two creative, gourmet dishes – one main course and one dessert - that showcase their talent and their restaurant's cuisine.

MEET THE CHEF OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



Reif Bin Othman,
Executive Head Chef
Zuma,
DIFC



Nick Alvis,
Chef Patron
Table 9,
Hilton Dubai Deira Creek



Juan Gonzales Fernandez,
Chef de cuisine
Villa Beach,
Jumeirah Beach Hotel



Cyril Bonnard
Chef de cuisine
Stay by Yannick Allèno,
One & Only The Palm



AND THE WINNER IS...
NICK ALVIS, Chef Patron
Table 9, Hilton Dubai Deira Creek

What the judges said:

🍷 Nick won his extra points due to his cooking techniques, presentation and flavors. 🍷

What we thought:

🍷 Nick presented dishes that made imaginative use of the mystery box of ingredients, yet tasted and looked flawless. He brings a lot of finesse in technique and creativity to the table. 🍷





Quail & Sherri surf & turf with crispy noodles and lentil and beetroot vinaigrette

SERVES 2

600g whole Sherri fish
3 whole quails
50g red lentils (soaked for 10 minutes)
50g green lentils (soaked for 10 minutes)
500ml chicken stock
300ml brown veal stock
150ml olive oil
200ml white wine
40ml white vinegar
4 shallots
1.5 bulb garlic
4 sprig thyme
1 bay leaf
Salt

FOR THE CRISPY NOODLES

100g egg noodles
50g peanut butter
5g chilli flakes
1 egg

THE WINNING RECIPES

1 Remove the fillets from the Sherri, scale, pin bone, trim, score and cut into half, to make four nice pieces. Wash in iced water. Place in fridge until later.

2 Remove legs and breasts of quail, trim up breast and place in fridge. In a hot pan, season and roast legs until golden and crispy.

3 Finely slice the shallots, and when the quail legs are nicely coloured, add shallots, garlic, thyme and bay leaf. Cook in the fat until lightly browned and then drain. Return everything to pan and deglaze with the wine. Reduce until almost gone, then add chicken stock and do the same. Repeat the process with the veal stock. Strain and place to one side.

4 To make the vinaigrette, blend olive oil and the white vinegar.

5 Bring the soaked and drained green lentils to the boil in lightly salted water and cook for 5 minutes, then add the soaked and drained red lentils and cook for a further 5 minutes. Strain and cool.

6 Finely dice the beetroot and leave at room temperature.

7 Blanch noodles in rapid boiling salted water until a little overcooked (just soft). Refresh in ice and drain.

In a bowl, mix egg, peanut butter and chilly. Then add noodles and season as required. Ball up the noodle, mix into 40g balls and fry in a non stick pan with a little olive oil, until golden and crispy on one side, turn and repeat on other side. Keep warm.

8 In a cold non stick pan, add a little olive oil and place the seasoned sherri fillets skin side down. Warm another non stick pan and when almost smoking, add the seasoned quail breasts skin side down.

9 When the Sherri and quail breasts skin are golden and crispy, turn and after about 30 seconds, remove and rest for another 30 seconds.

10 Warm the quail leg reduction and whisk in vinaigrette, add lentils and beetroot.

To serve, assemble noodles and a little bit of the lentils and beetroot on a plate. Place the Sherri and quail intertwined on the plate (two breasts and two pieces of fish) and spoon over a little more lentil and beetroot vinaigrette.

Panna cotta with vanilla poached pumpkin and English crumble

SERVES 2

200g milk
200g cream
60g sugar
100g mascarpone
3.5 leaves gelatine (soaked in cold water and squeezed dry)
100g pumpkin diced x 1.5 cm
50g sugar
60g water
1 vanilla pod
FOR THE CRUMBLE
300g flour (all purpose)
150g butter (unsalted)
75g caster sugar
75g Demerara sugar

1 Bring milk, cream, mascarpone and sugar to boil, whisk in gelatine, strain and pour into moulds. Refrigerate until set.

2 Blend or rub flour and butter until it becomes like breadcrumbs, then add sugar until nice crumble. Bake on a non-stick tray at 160C for 10 minutes and then stir, return to oven for further 5 mins and repeat process until crunchy and golden.

3 Bring sugar, water and vanilla to boil, then add diced pumpkin and leave to cool and marinate for 1 hr.

4 Rub moulds with warm water until the panna cottas loosen, then turn on to the plate. Spoon over poached pumpkin pieces, then spoon over some crumble and serve.





The jury

The award



Winner at the BBC Good Food ME Awards 2012
for Best Middle Eastern Restaurant
in the Casual Dining Category



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RESTAURANTS - CASUAL DINING

Best International

FINALISTS

- * **Aprons and Hammers** -
Dubai International Marine Club
- * **Butcher Shop and Grill** - Dubai
- * **Chili's** - UAE
- * **Jamie's Italian** - Dubai Festival City

THE WINNER IS...

Jamie's Italian - Dubai Festival City

“We feel absolutely great that we won. It's an honour! We have great plans for the future, as we are continuing to grow in the UAE, and have a new outlet opening up at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai, which is going to be absolutely great.”

– Abi Patil



Best Asian

FINALISTS

- * **PF CHANG'S** - UAE
- * **Lemongrass** - UAE
- * **Noodle House** - UAE
- * **Yum** - Radisson Blu Hotel,
Dubai Deira Creek

THE WINNER IS...

PF CHANG'S - UAE

“We're very excited that we won the award. Al Shaya has lots of great brands under their umbrella, and ideas to expand the restaurant. We constantly provide good service and food to our customers.”

– Dominic Valerio



RESTAURANTS - CASUAL DINING



Best Middle Eastern

FINALISTS

- * **Burj Al Hamam - Dubai**
- * **Mezza House - Downtown Dubai**
- * **Reem al Bawadi - Dubai**
- * **Zataar W Zeit - Dubai**

AND THE WINNER IS... Zataar W Zeit - Dubai

“We kind of knew we were going to win it. We will be expanding into Riyadh soon, and opening two new outlets in Motor City and Tecom area in Dubai as well, so we have quite a lot going on.”

– Mahmoud Harb

Best Indian

FINALISTS

- * **Bombay - Marco Polo Hotel Deira**
- * **Gazebo - Dubai**
- * **Kamat - Dubai**
- * **Zafran - Dubai**

AND THE WINNER IS... Zafran - Dubai

“It is indeed a proud moment for all of us at Zafran, as the brand has been created from scratch rather than being a franchise. So much work has gone into making Zafran a success and it has been a very personal journey for all of us. It feels fantastic to get this recognition and at the same time, it has motivated us to exceed expectations in the future. The entire team at Zafran is grateful to the jury and guests for their continued patronage. Thank you!”

– Ankur Chakraborty



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New





Best Cafe

FINALISTS

- * Jones the Grocer - Dubai
- * More Café - Dubai
- * Paul Café - Dubai
- * The Lime Tree Café & Kitchen - Dubai

AND THE WINNER IS... Paul Café - Dubai

6 We are thrilled about winning this award, especially as it is completely vote-driven by those who matter – our customers. This award is a confirmation of our focus on traditional food. 9

– Rudy Haddad



Thank You

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HOME COOKING - INGREDIENTS

Favorite Supermarket

FINALISTS

- * Carrefour
- * Spinneys
- * Lulu Hypermarket
- * Waitrose
- * Park 'n Shop

AND THE WINNER IS...
Carrefour

Comment unavailable.



Favorite Specialty Food Store

FINALISTS

- * Ripe Farmers Market
- * Organic Foods and Cafe
- * Glutenfreesupermarket.ae
- * Marks & Spencer
- * Milk and Honey

AND THE WINNER IS...
Ripe Farmers Market

“Thank you so much! We are extremely excited about winning this award and grateful that our loyal customers keep supporting us and help us grow in the region. We have lots of exciting projects in the pipeline.”

– Becky Balderstone



Favorite Dairy Brand

FINALISTS

- * Al Rawabi
- * Al Ain
- * Almarai
- * Lurpak
- * Nestle

AND THE WINNER IS...
Al Ain Dairy

“I’m very excited that we won this award. It’s great to be associated with BBC Good Food ME! And at times like these, we are very proud of our brand.”

– Kingston Fernandes



Favorite Store Cupboard Brand

FINALISTS

- * Knorr
- * Heinz
- * Maggi
- * John West
- * Sacla

AND THE WINNER IS...
Knorr

“We are honoured to be voted by consumers, and constantly work on providing them everything they need to create nutritious dishes that add joy to family mealtimes.”

– Arijit Ghose



HOME COOKING - INGREDIENTS

Favorite Olive Oil Brand

FINALISTS

- * Bertolli
- * Rafael Salgado
- * Figaro
- * Rahma Borges

AND THE WINNER IS...
Rafael Salgado

“We’re having a wonderful time at the awards! We have been waiting for our category to be announced, as we were quite sure we would win. The brand offers the purest extra virgin olive oil, so are proud of this award.”

– Omar Kunnath



Favorite Tea Brand

FINALISTS

- * Twinings
- * Lipton
- * TWG
- * Red Label
- * Alokozay

AND THE WINNER IS...
Twinings

“We feel ecstatic and greatly honoured that Twinings has won this prestigious award amidst competition. We thank BBC Good Food ME and our customers for making Twinings a favorite tea brand.”

– Mukesh Dhoundiyal



Favorite Coffee Brand

FINALISTS

- * Nescafe
- * Coffee Planet
- * Ali café
- * Davidoff
- * Continental

AND THE WINNER IS...
Nescafe

Comment unavailable.



Favorite Juice Brand

FINALISTS

- * Barakat
- * Florida's Natural
- * Lacnor
- * Masafi
- * Del Monte

AND THE WINNER IS...
Barakat

“We are proud and humbled to have won this award! I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our devoted customers who religiously look for our fresh juices in stores every day.”

– Mike Wunsch





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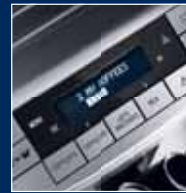
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*Source: GFK 41 Countries – June 2011

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* Samsung
* LG
* Miele

FINALISTS

* Indesit
* Teka

AND THE WINNER IS...

Samsung

Comment unavailable.



Favourite Small Kitchen Appliance Brand

* Kenwood
* Philips
* Bosch

FINALISTS

* Panasonic
* Culin'Or

AND THE WINNER IS...

Kenwood

“It is a very rewarding moment for Kenwood to be recognised by our consumers. I would like to thank BBC Good Food ME for creating the right forum for consumers to express their views.”

– Ashraf Khairallah

Favourite Tableware Store

* Tavola
* Lakeland
* Crate & Barrel

FINALISTS

* Ikea
* Home Centre

THE WINNER IS...

Tavola

“It was great to achieve this for our 10th anniversary year. It was a lovely evening.”

– Wakami Saab



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And the party continued...

Everyone enjoyed the jazz band's performances as well as the after-party with publisher Dominic De Sousa's CPI band.



There was a celebratory mood in the air



The Gramercy jazz duo mesmerised the audience



The after-party carried on with Dominic's band



Pre-event mingling at the reception area



CPI CEO Dominic was highly entertaining



The glamorous back-up singers of the after-party band



The BBC Good Food ME team



The revelry went on all evening



BBC Good Food ME's Carol Owen cheered winners on along with her guests



The vintage decor set the tone for the event



The hats helped everyone get into the mood



Happy award winners caught on camera celebrating

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A taste of America

There's nothing quite like Chili's for a homely, comforting and hearty Southern-style meal. Take a look at how far the restaurant has come from its Dallas home.



From humble beginning as a small Dallas restaurant in 1975, Chili's is now perceived as an international stalwart of casual dining with over 1,500 restaurants worldwide, in 33 countries. Originally created as a hamburger restaurant/chilli house themed with traditional Southwestern flair, Chili's was able to create a niche product by serving quality home cooked food in a casual, friendly environment. The décor, complete with decorated tiles, colourful posters and unique collectibles was complemented by enthusiastic staff who helped create a festive atmosphere in the restaurants.

Since it opened in the UAE in 1997, it has become a firm favourite with local customers. Focusing on providing consumers with more of what they want, Chili's has kept its guests happy by keeping the menu simple, while introducing new and innovative dishes to keep its core offering fresh and exciting. The recent addition of Texas Cheese Poppers, Avocado Burger, Chicken Enchilada Pasta and new Honey BBQ and Honey-Chipotle flavours on the all-time favourite BBQ Beef Ribs, complement the time-honoured favourites such as Oldtimer, Wings Over Buffalo, Mushroom Jack Fajita, Country-Fried Steak and the dessert lover's weakness – Molten Chocolate Cake. All the food is served fresh, in generous portions, and the use of mugs and baskets gives Chili's that true Texas-style 'American feel'.

With 20 restaurants across the country, Chili's has a sizeable reach across UAE, and has been recognised with the Superbrand title for the eight consecutive time this year. It continues to connect with its consumers by embodying a fun, fresh and flavourful personality like No Place Else.

Here is an easy yet delicious recipe that you can try to bring a little taste of Chili's home.

Chile Shrimp Quesadillas

Serves 1

INGREDIENTS

- 15ml butter oil
- 1 pc 12-inch Flour Tortilla
- 1 cup Jack Cheese, shredded
- 9 pcs shrimp, cut in half
- 15g garlic butter
- 1 tbsp Blossom spice (what is this?)
- ¼ cup Tomatoes, diced
- 55g kernel corn
- 1/3 cup Lettuce, shredded
- FOR GARNISH**
- ¼ cup Tomato, diced
- 45ml Sour Cream

METHOD

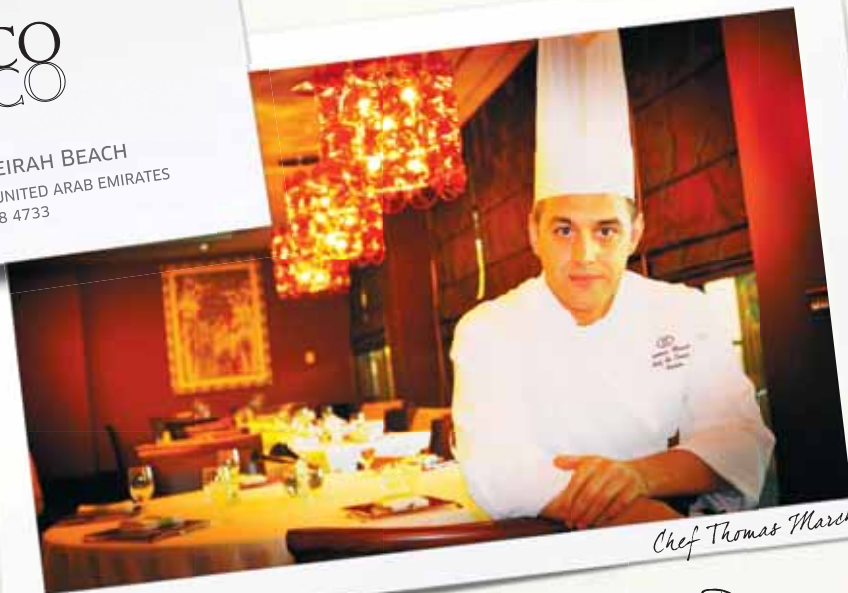
- 1** Heat pan with butter oil, then sauté shrimp with blossom spice. Make sure to cook each side for 1 ½ minutes. After cooking, cut the shrimp into half.
- 2** Heat a separate pan with butter oil to cook the flour tortilla, then add jack cheese on top until melted. Make sure to use low heat temperature.
- 3** Add a layer of shrimp, diced tomatoes and kernel corn, then remove the tortilla from the pan.
- 4** Fold the flour tortilla into a moon shape then cut into 4 pieces
- 5** Place the tortillas in a serving plate. Garnish with shredded lettuce on the side, then top with diced tomatoes and sour cream.



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Chef Thomas Marchi

Life is Magnifique in Dubai!



The Private Dining Room



The Rococo Restaurant



AWARD-WINNING CUISINE, ITALIAN STYLE.

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RococoDubai



Home Cooking

Inspiring recipes for easy everyday meals and stylish weekend entertaining



Little Louise cupcakes,
recipe p88

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suppers, P64



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skills, P76



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Make it tonight

Five smart suppers for five days of the working week. Recipes CASSIE BEST Photographs JONATHAN KENNEDY

Root veg & pancetta toad-in-the-hole with quick onion gravy

SERVES 4 • PREP 25 MINS • COOK 50 MINS **Easy** **P** **Folate** **Fibre** **2 of 5-a-day**

140g plain flour, plus 2 tbsp for the gravy
 1 tsp baking powder
 4 rosemary sprigs, leaves picked and chopped
 4 large eggs
 200ml milk
 70g pack pancetta slices
 600g 5oz mixed root veg, peeled and cut into wedges or batons (we used

carrots, parsnips and beetroot)
 2 small red onions, cut into wedges
 3 tbsp vegetable oil
 4 tbsp onion chutney
 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
 500ml beef stock
 Peas, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Mix the flour, baking powder, rosemary, eggs and milk in a jug. Set aside.
2 Wrap the pancetta slices around some of the root veg, then tip into a large roasting tin. Add the onions, season and drizzle with the oil. Bake for 25 mins. Increase oven to 240C/220C fan.

3 Remove the tin from the oven and pour in the batter mixture. Return to the oven and bake for 10 mins until puffed up and golden, then lower to 220C/200C fan and bake for a further 15 mins.

4 To make the gravy, put the onion chutney, balsamic vinegar and flour into a saucepan, stir well, then bubble for 1-2 mins over a medium heat. Pour in the stock and whisk until smooth, then bring to a simmer and bubble for 5 mins until thickened. Serve the toad-in-the-hole with the onion gravy and peas, if you like.

PER SERVING 514 kcal, protein 21g, carbs 59g, fat 22g, sat fat 6g, fibre 10g, sugar 22g, salt 1.7g



Squash, feta & pine nut tart

MINS **Easy** **V** **Calcium** 1 of 5-a-day

A little plain flour, for dusting
 500g pack puff pastry
 2 tbsp each onion chutney and harissa
 ½ butternut squash, peeled,
 deseeded and very thinly sliced
 200g pack feta, crumbled
 1 tbsp pine nuts
 Small bunch mint, leaves picked
 Large handful rocket leaves

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Put a large baking tray on the middle shelf to heat up. On a floured surface, roll out the pastry to a 30cm square. Trim the edges, lightly score a 1cm border around the edge of the tart, and prick the centre all over with a fork. Transfer the pastry base to a sheet of baking parchment.

2 Mix the chutney and harissa, and spread over the middle of the pastry. Arrange the squash in one layer over the top, then season. Put the tart on the hot baking tray and bake for 30 mins.

3 Remove the tart, scatter over the feta and pine nuts, and bake for 20 mins more. Scatter over the mint and rocket to serve.

PER SERVING 676 kcals, protein 17g, carbs 55g, fat 43g, sat fat 21g, fibre 3g, sugar 9g, salt 3.0g

Tomato & anchovy risotto with crispy crumbs

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS PLUS
 STANDING • COOK 30 MINS

Easy **Good for you** **Fibre** 2 of 5-a-day

6 anchovy fillets in olive oil,
 drained, oil reserved
 1 small red onion, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, crushed
 140g risotto rice
 700ml hot chicken
 or vegetable stock
 400g can cherry tomatoes
 100g fresh white breadcrumbs
 Small handful basil leaves (optional)
 Shaved Parmesan, to serve

1 Heat half the oil from the anchovies in a saucepan. Add the anchovy fillets and onion and cook for 5 mins to soften. Add

the garlic and cook for 1 min more. Tip in the rice, stir to coat in the oil, then cook for 2 mins until the grains turn translucent.

2 Add the stock, a ladle at a time, making sure the liquid is absorbed before you add the next and stirring continuously while cooking. Once you've added half the stock, tip in the tomatoes.

3 Continue cooking and adding the stock until the rice is cooked but still has a little bite – the risotto should be oozy but not soupy. Season to taste, turn off the heat, put a lid on and leave for 5 mins.

4 Heat the remaining anchovy oil in a frying pan, add the breadcrumbs and toss until evenly golden. Serve the risotto in bowls with the crispy crumbs, basil leaves (if you like), and shaved Parmesan scattered on top.

PER SERVING 614 kcals, protein 26g, carbs 100g, fat 12g, sat fat 2g, fibre 6g, sugar 9g, salt 2.8g >>



Greek lamb & macaroni bake

SERVES 6 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 1
HR 15 MINS **Easy** **Calcium** **1 of 5-a-day**

1 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, crushed
500g lean lamb mince
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 beef or lamb stock cube
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp dried oregano
400g macaroni
250g tub ricotta
50g Parmesan, grated
50ml milk
Garlic bread, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion and cook for 10 mins until soft. Add the garlic and cook for 1 min more, then tip in the lamb mince, turn up the

heat and brown, breaking up the mince with a wooden spoon.

2 Once the lamb is browned, add the cinnamon, crumbled stock cube, tomatoes and oregano. Stir well and simmer for 15 mins, covered, then for 15 mins, uncovered, until the sauce has thickened and the tomatoes have cooked down.

3 Meanwhile, cook the macaroni following pack instructions. Drain well. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan.

4 Mix together the ricotta, most of the Parmesan and the milk with plenty of seasoning, and stir into the macaroni. Tip the mince into a large baking dish, top with the macaroni mixture, and scatter over the remaining Parmesan. Bake for 30 mins until golden and bubbling. Serve hot with garlic bread, if you like.

PER SERVING 548 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 56g, fat 21g, sat fat 10g, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 1.0g



Crispy chilli beef

SERVES 3 ● PREP 25 MINS ●
COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **Vit C**

350g thin-cut minute steak, very
thinly sliced into strips
3 tbsp cornflour
2 tsp Chinese five-spice
100ml vegetable oil
1 red pepper, thinly sliced
1 red chilli, thinly sliced
4 spring onions, sliced, green and
white parts separated
2 garlic cloves, crushed
Thumb-sized piece ginger, cut
into matchsticks
4 tbsp rice wine vinegar or
white wine vinegar
1 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
2 tbsp tomato ketchup
Cooked noodles and prawn
crackers, to serve (optional)

1 Put the beef in a bowl and toss in the cornflour and five-spice. Heat the oil in a wok or large frying pan until hot, then add the beef and fry until golden and crisp. Scoop out the beef and drain on kitchen paper. Pour away all but 1 tbsp oil.

2 Add the pepper, half the chilli, the white ends of the spring onions, garlic and ginger to the pan. Stir-fry for 3 mins to soften, but don't let the garlic and ginger burn. Mix the vinegar, soy, chilli sauce and ketchup in a jug with 2 tbsp water, then pour over the veg. Bubble for 2 mins, then add the beef back to the pan and toss well to coat. Serve the beef on noodles with prawn crackers, if you like, scattered with the remaining chilli and the green parts of the spring onions.

PER SERVING 454 kcals, protein 26g, carbs 32g, fat 23g, sat fat 5g, fibre 2g, sugar 15g, salt 2.2g **G**



EUROPEAN MEAT - TRADITION, QUALITY AND TASTE

In March 2013 the residents and guests of Dubai will have the opportunity to tingle their taste buds with the culinary delights of beef and poultry from the European Union, including Polish dishes.

Meat and cold meat constitute an important ingredient of the human diet both red meat and poultry being a good natural source of protein. In the European Union and in Poland great importance is placed on natural ways of food production. Widespread stock-raising areas with access to fresh water and natural fodder for the animals are some of the many factors that contribute to the unique taste of the meat and cold meat.

The cattle and poultry, and also the relevant animal fodder, are subject to strict veterinary controls, guaranteeing that the meat is a 100 per cent pure quality product which retains all its healthy nutrition and taste.

The beef and poultry are grown in a humanitarian way in accordance with the relevant animal protection Acts and in accordance with the correct production practice that observes norms defined by the Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP), the commercial standards of ISO aligned to the standards of good manufacturing practices (GMP) and the Good Hygienic Practice (GHP). The meat and cold meat on offer are the result of a special production method that is controlled at each step of the slaughter in the prescribed HALAL manner, processing, storing and the distribution.

The essential element that decides the quality of European Union meat and meat products is the preservation of its traditional taste, smell and appearance, while using state of the art processing technology. The traditional cold meat that come from the European Union are prepared based on centuries old recipes which have been prepared and appreciated for many years by consumers beyond the European Union. They have been recognized with many award winning prizes in many culinary and gastronomy competitions.

Meat and cold meat from the European Union, thanks to their unique attributes, can be consumed unprocessed or kept refrigerated or frozen. For that reason they are an excellent product for exporting even to a distant consumer.

The European Union meat and cold meat producers will present their best quality products during the International Agribusiness Trade Event AGRA ME 2013 that will take place from 26th to 28th March, 2013, at the Dubai International Exhibition Centre on Stand P20, Pavilion 2. The products to be presented will include fresh cold or frozen beef (e.g., bullock's shank, beef tenderloin, sirloin), poultry and processed products. During the trade show there will be a presentation of the natural farming and animal health prevention methods used, and the production process resulting in the final product meat, meat products and cold meat. The stand from the European Union will invite you to try best quality poultry and beef, and also a wide variety of cold meat. Films, advice, tasting and also live cooking stations will bring you closer to the quality and taste of meat and cold meat coming from the European Union. We are certain that the products presented by us will become a culinary delight on every table as they will satisfy even the most refined food tasters.

Details about the EUROPEAN MEAT - TRADITION, QUALITY AND TASTE programme that promotes the meat from the European Union and their organizers the Association of Butchers and Producers of Meat of the Republic of Poland are available at: www.eu-meat.eu.



CAMPAIGN FINANCED WITH AID
FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION
AND THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND



Agencja Rynku Rolnego
AND ALSO THE PORK
PROMOTION FUND AND
THE BEEF PROMOTION FUND



Seasonal stars

Sustainable choice

New and exciting budget-friendly recipes with the best vegetables of the month. Recipes SILVANA FRANCO
Photographs PHILIP WEBB



New idea for mash

Slow-roast pork belly with celeriac & pear mash

SERVES 4 • PREP 20 MINS • COOK 2½ HRS

Easy P Fibre MASH ONLY

1.5kg pork belly, skin scored
3 rosemary sprigs, leaves stripped
2 tsp coarse sea salt crystals
10 black peppercorns
Purple sprouting broccoli, steamed, to serve
FOR THE MASH
750g celeriac, cubed
1 large potato, cubed
2 ripe pears, peeled and cubed
3 tbsp double cream
Large knob of butter

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Take the pork out of the fridge and pat the skin dry. Put the rosemary leaves, salt and pepper in a mini chopper and grind together (or do this with a mortar and pestle). Rub the rosemary salt all over the pork, making sure it gets into the cuts in the skin. Sit the pork in a large roasting tin, ideally on a rack, and roast for 30 mins.
2 Reduce heat to 170C/150C fan and roast for 1½ hrs more. Turn oven back up to 220C/200C fan and roast for 20-30 mins to crisp. Leave to rest on a board for 10 mins before carving.
3 When the pork is nearly ready to come out, put the celeriac and potato in a large pan of water, bring to the boil and cook for 10 mins until just tender. Add the pears and cook for 2 mins more. Drain well, then mash until smooth – a mouli or potato ricer does this job best. Beat in a splash of cream and some butter, and serve with the pork and broccoli.
PER SERVING 901 kcs, protein 54g, carbs 18g, fat 68g, sat fat 28g, fibre 8g, sugar 10g, salt 3.4g



Try our cover recipe!

Leek, ricotta & Gruyère tart

SERVES 6-8 • PREP 25 MINS •

COOK 45 MINS A little effort V P Calcium

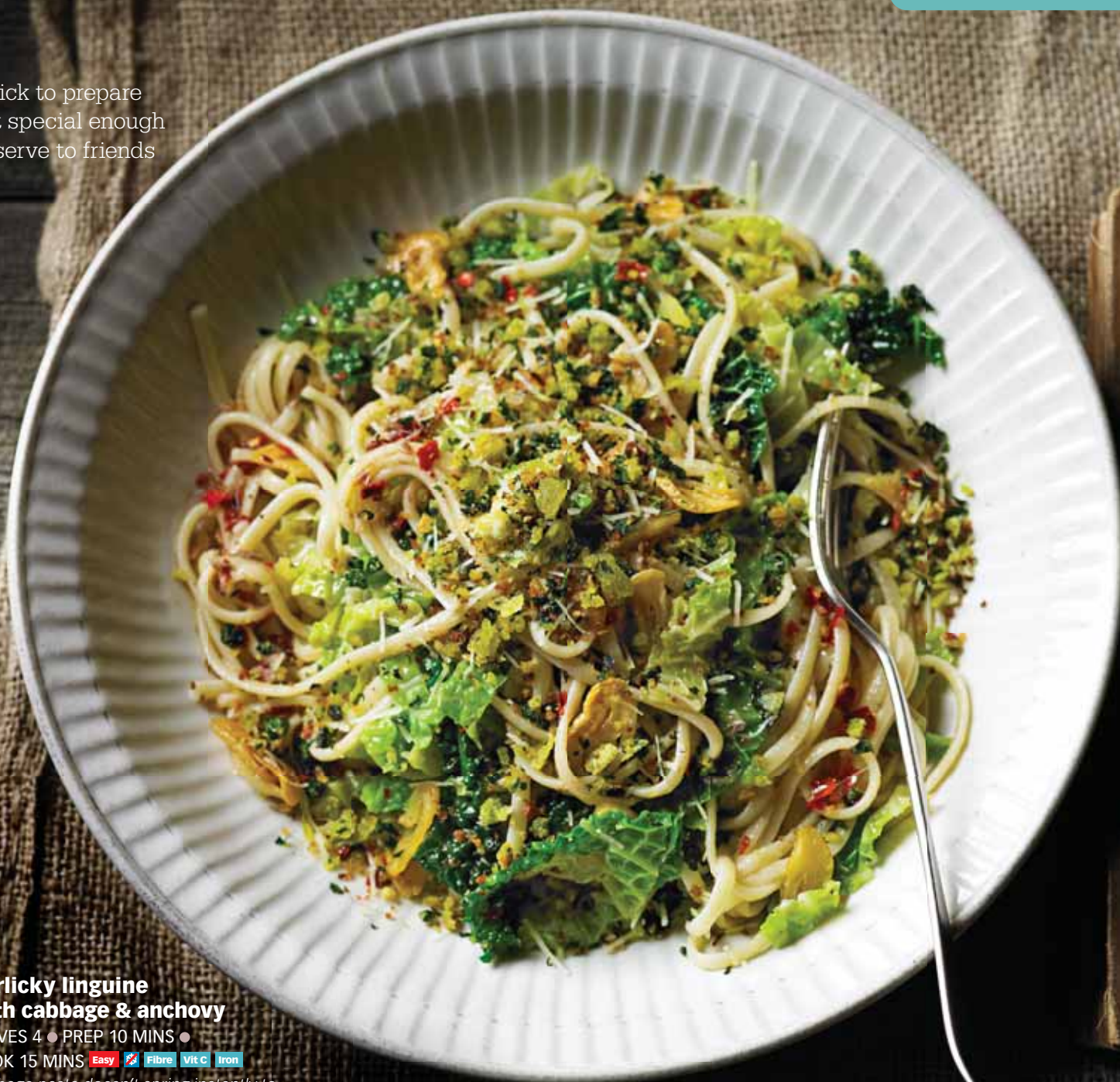
The ricotta gives this tart a lovely, light, cheese-cakey texture. Any leftovers make a great packed lunch.

500g pack all-butter shortcrust pastry
Knob of butter
2 large leeks, sliced
250g ricotta
100ml double cream
2 eggs
2 tbsp chopped tarragon
100g Gruyère or vegetarian alternative, grated

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Roll out the pastry and use to line a 23cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Prick the base with a fork and line with

baking parchment and baking beans. Sit the tin on a baking sheet and bake for 10 mins, then remove beans and parchment and return to the oven for a further 5 mins until pale golden. Reduce oven to 180C/160C fan
2 Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large pan and gently cook the leeks for 10 mins until softened. Beat together the ricotta, cream, eggs, tarragon, a little salt and plenty of black pepper. Stir in the leeks and all but a handful of the cheese.
3 Pour the mixture into the tart case and scatter over the remaining cheese. Bake for 25-30 mins until golden and set. Leave to settle for 5 mins, then carefully remove from the tin and allow to cool a little on a wire rack. Serve warm.
PER SERVING (8) 467 kcs, protein 12g, carbs 29g, fat 34g, sat fat 15g, fibre 2g, sugar 2g, salt 1g

Quick to prepare
but special enough
to serve to friends



Garlicky linguine with cabbage & anchovy

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 15 MINS **Easy**  **Fibre**  **Vit C**  **Iron**

Cabbage pasta doesn't spring instantly to mind as a classic, but it's cheap and delicious.

400g linguine or spaghetti

**1 small Savoy cabbage, cut into
1cm-wide slices**

4 tbsp olive oil

5 garlic cloves, thickly sliced

50g can anchovies in olive oil

Large pinch crushed chilli flakes

FOR THE CRISPY CRUMBS

1-2 tbsp olive oil

50g fresh white breadcrumbs

4 tbsp finely chopped parsley

2 tbsp freshly grated pecorino or Parmesan

1 Cook the linguine in a large pan of boiling, salted water following pack instructions, adding the cabbage for the final 4 mins of cooking time.

2 Meanwhile, heat the oil in a very small saucepan and gently cook the garlic. As soon as it starts to turn golden, lift out with a fork and set aside – it's very important that the garlic does not brown or it will spoil the flavour of the oil.

3 Add the anchovies and their oil, and cook for 1-2 mins, mashing with a fork. Add about 150ml of hot water (take a ladle or two from

the pasta pan) and simmer very gently until the pasta is ready.

4 To make the crumbs, heat the oil in a large pan and cook the bread and parsley, stirring frequently, for 5 mins until crisp and golden. Mix in the cheese.

5 Drain the pasta quite lightly and return to the pan. Add the anchovy sauce, garlic, chilli and plenty of black pepper. Toss well to combine, then divide between bowls, scatter with the hot crumbs and serve.

PER SERVING 622 kcals, protein 22g, carbs 82g, fat 23g, sat fat 4g, fibre 7g, sugar 7g, salt 1.7g >>

Vegetarian
sharing starter



Spiced swede fritters

SERVES 4 AS A STARTER, MAKES 15 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 35 MINS **Easy** **V** **2 of 5-a-day**

The mild flavour of swede is a great vehicle for vibrant spices, making it perfect for this twist on Indian vegetable pakoras.

- 1 650g swede (yellow turnip), peeled and diced into small chunks**
- 75g plain flour**
- 100ml crème fraîche**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped**
- 1 red onion, finely chopped**
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper**
- 2 tsp garam masala**
- ½ tsp ground turmeric**
- 1 tsp crushed coriander seeds**

small handful coriander, chopped
sunflower oil, for frying
mango chutney, to serve

1 Cook the swede in a pan of boiling water for 15 mins until tender, then drain well. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, crème fraîche and egg to make a smooth, thick batter. Stir in the chilli, onion, spices and coriander, then season generously. Very roughly mash the swede and stir into the mixture.

2 Heat a splash of the oil in a large non-stick pan and cook small, flattened spoonfuls of the mixture for 2 mins on each side until crisp and browned. Serve hot with chutney.

PER SERVING (4) 242 kcs, protein 6g, carbs 23g, fat 14g, sat fat 7g, fibre 3g, sugar 9g, salt 0.1g



Roasted carrots with goat's cheese & pomegranate

SERVES 6 AS A STARTER OR SIDE, OR 4 AS A MAIN ● PREP 10 MINS ● COOK 50 MINS

Easy **V** **Good for you** **2 of 5-a-day**

A lovely combination of warm sweet carrots tossed with cool, fresh goat's cheese and juicy pomegranate. This is one of those dishes that is interesting enough to serve as a vegetarian main course or as a starter or side dish.

750g carrots, cut into large chunks

2 tbsp olive oil

2 tsp cumin seeds

Grated zest and juice of 1 small orange

400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed

100g white-rinded vegetarian goat's cheese

small bunch oregano or mint, roughly chopped

75g pomegranate seeds

Warm flatbreads, to serve





1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Toss the carrots with 1 tbsp of the oil, sprinkle with the cumin seeds and orange zest, and season with salt. Spread onto a large baking sheet and roast for 50 mins until tender and catching some colour on the edges.

2 Stir the chickpeas into the roasted carrots, then tip onto a large serving platter. Drizzle with the remaining oil and a little of the orange juice. Crumble over the goat's cheese and scatter with the herbs and pomegranate seeds. Serve warm with toasted flatbreads.

PER SERVING (6) 190 kcs, protein 8g, carbs 20g, fat 10g, sat fat 4g, fibre 5g, sugar 11g, salt 0.5g

Beef, ale & parsnip pudding

SERVES 4 ● PREP 20 MINS ● COOK 3½

HOURS **A little effort**  **Fibre**  **Folate**  **Iron**  **2 of 5-a-day**

You can make the filling the night before, then steam the pudding the following morning for a delicious Friday lunch.

1 large onion, chopped

100g smoked bacon lardons

2 tbsp olive oil

500g lean stewing beef, cubed

2 tbsp plain flour

3 parsnips, cubed

500ml brown ale

300ml beef stock

2 tbsp cranberry or redcurrant jelly

4 thyme sprigs

Greens, to serve (optional)

FOR THE SUET PASTRY

Butter, for greasing

300g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting

2 tsp English mustard powder

140g shredded suet

1 Heat a large pan and cook the onion and lardons together for 5 mins until golden. Scoop out with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the oil to the pan, dust the beef with the flour, then evenly brown over a high heat.

2 Add the parsnips, ale, stock, jelly, thyme and lardon mixture to the pan. Bring to the boil, then cover and simmer for 1½ hrs until the meat is tender.

3 Generously butter a 1.5-litre pudding basin. To make the pastry, mix together the flour, mustard powder, suet and ½ tsp table salt. Add enough cold water, about

150ml, to make a soft dough. Remove one-quarter of the dough and set to one side. On a heavily floured surface, roll out the remaining dough to make a large round, big enough to line the basin.


4 Carefully lay the pastry in the basin (aim to have 1cm of pastry overhanging the rim), then press the edges of the join together to seal. Roll out the remaining one-quarter into a circle big enough to cover the top.

5 Pour off the cooking liquid from the filling into a small pan and set aside. Discard the thyme stalks. Spoon the filling into the lined basin and pour over 100ml of the cooking liquid. Fold over the overhanging pastry and brush with water. Place the lid on top, pressing firmly around the edges to seal.

6 Butter a sheet of baking parchment, fold in a large pleat and lay, butter-side down, on top of the pudding. Cover with a pleated layer of foil and finally tie with string, making a loop for the handle so you can lift the pudding easily.

7 Sit a small trivet or a large cookie cutter in the bottom of a deep saucepan that's big enough to take the basin easily. Half-fill the pan with water and bring to the boil. Lower in the pudding, cover and simmer for 2 hrs, topping up with boiling water when necessary.

8 Reheat the cooking liquid, bubbling it down a little so it reduces into a tasty gravy. Carefully lift out the pudding. Run a knife around the rim, then turn out and serve with gravy and greens, if you like.

PER SERVING 1072 kJ, protein 33g, carbs 86g, fat 62g, sat fat 28g, fibre 7g, sugar 15g, salt 1.5g 



A SUPER SALAD



Try this seasonal salad for a quick yet delicious supper.

Herby pork with apple & chicory salad

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 mins ● COOK 25 mins

Easy  **Low fat**  **Low cal**  **2 of 5-a-day**  **Good for you**

400g pork tenderloin, trimmed of any fat and sinew (can be replaced with chicken)

1 tbsp walnut oil

2 tsp wholegrain mustard

1 tbsp each chopped tarragon and parsley

Juice of 1 lemon

1 tbsp honey

2 large eating apples, cored and sliced

270g pack chicory, leaves separated

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Rub the pork with 1 tsp oil, 1 tsp mustard and some seasoning. Brown, transfer to a baking tray and press on half the herbs. Roast for 15 mins until just cooked.

2 To make the salad, mix the lemon juice, honey and remaining walnut oil and mustard together. Season and toss through the apples, chicory and remaining herbs. Serve the pork sliced, with the salad on the side.

The artisanal La Tourangelle toasted walnut oils are hand-crafted in California using 150-year old traditional methods. It's perfect for adding a nutty taste to any salad.



5 ways with cauliflower

Sustainable
choice

Make the most of this inexpensive and nutritious vegetable.

Recipes ADAM RUSSELL

Crunchy cauliflower & carrot salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS • NO COOK

Easy V Good for you Vit C Folate 2 of 5-a-day

Cut **1 cauliflower** into small florets. Mix with **2 grated carrots**, **1 finely chopped red onion**, **2 tsp capers** and a **small bunch parsley**, chopped.

Whisk **1 tbsp white wine vinegar** with **1 tsp Dijon mustard**. Season and mix in **2 tbsp olive oil** and **1 tbsp mayonnaise**. Pour over the salad, mix well and serve.

PER SERVING 177 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 9g, fat 13g, sat fat 2g, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 0.2g

Spicy stir-fried cauliflower

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 20 MINS

Easy V Low fat Good for you Vit C 1 of 5-a-day

Heat **2 tbsp vegetable oil** in a large pan or wok with a lid. Add a thumb-sized piece ginger, finely chopped, **1 tsp chilli flakes**, **1 tbsp cumin seeds** and **1 tsp turmeric**. Cook until spices are fragrant. Reduce heat and stir in **1 cauliflower**, broken into florets, then season.

Turn down the heat, put on the lid and gently cook for 10 mins or until softened. Sprinkle over a **small bunch chopped coriander** before serving.

PER SERVING 102 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 5g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 3g, sugar 4g, salt 0.1g

Cauliflower soup

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 15 MINS

Easy V Low fat Calcium Folate 2 of 5-a-day

Cook **1 chopped onion**, **½ a thinly sliced leek** and **2 crushed garlic cloves** in a **knob of butter** until soft. Add **1 roughly chopped cauliflower** and **750ml whole milk**, cover and simmer until the cauliflower is tender.

Place everything into a blender and blitz until smooth. Stir in **50g grated Parmesan** or vegetarian alternative, ladle into bowls and finish with a few snipped chives scattered on top.

PER SERVING 224 kcals, protein 17g, carbs 16g, fat 10g, sat fat 6g, fibre 3g, sugar 14g, salt 0.5g

Classic cauliflower cheese

SERVES 4 • PREP 5 MINS • COOK 40 MINS

Easy V Calcium Folate 1 of 5-a-day

Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Boil **1 cauliflower**, broken into florets, until just tender. Drain and place in an ovenproof dish. Melt **25g butter** in a small saucepan, then stir in **2 tbsp plain flour** for a few mins. Gradually mix in **300ml whole milk** to make a smooth sauce, then stir in **75g grated vegetarian cheddar**.

Pour over the cauliflower, top with **3 tbsp breadcrumbs** and another **50g grated vegetarian cheddar**, then place in the oven to bake for 30 mins until golden and bubbling.

PER SERVING 326 kcals, protein 18g, carbs 23g, fat 18g, sat fat 11g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 1.0g

Cauliflower & onion purée

SERVES 4 • PREP 25 MINS • COOK 20 MINS

Easy V Low fat Good for you Vit C 2 of 5-a-day

Place **1 cauliflower**, cut into florets, and **1 roughly chopped large onion** into a pan. Pour in enough **whole milk** to almost cover, bring to a simmer, then cook for 15-20 mins or until the cauliflower is completely tender.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cauliflower and onion to a blender with a ladleful of whole milk. Blitz until puréed, adding more milk if you like. Season and serve with a knob of melted butter on top. Delicious with pan-fried fish.

PER SERVING 92 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 9g, fat 3g, sat fat 2g, fibre 3g, sugar 7g, salt 0.1g GF

Veg box ideas



Photograph STUART OVENDEN | Styling JO HARRIS

Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
expert cooking tips
and product picks
for your pantry.

Snack attack

Avoid reaching out for family-sized snack bags by transferring nibbles into mini plastic storage boxes, and keep them in your bag, at your desk or at home, so you always have them at hand. Here are a few clever ideas to tide you over those awkward in-between hunger pangs, whatever the situation you're in:

Pre-dinner peckish: Prepare a bowl of crudité and hummous or spicy salsa dip, and place it on your kitchen counter while cooking dinner.

Afternoon energiser: Snack on slices of pineapple topped with cottage cheese and nuts.

Out shopping: Always carry a pack of dried fruits and mixed nuts or seeds, to snack on.

When you've just left the gym: Eat a banana or low-fat yoghurt, as they enhance muscle recovery, boost glycogen intake, and are a great carbohydrate and protein combination.

Super solutions

Include these superfoods, recommended by the nutritionists at nutrition and catering service company Right Bite, in your diet, to give it a health makeover:

- Eat one cup of **berries** daily to prevent cancer and delay ageing. Berries can be added to muffins and cake for a fruity kick.
- Rich in fibre, protein, vitamin E and calcium, **almonds** are ideal for adding to cakes, or as a topping over salads or cereal.
- Lower blood pressure and increase your Vitamin C intake with one cup of raw, chopped **celery**. Celery adds a delicious crunch to salads, and in soup.
- Rich in omega 3-fatty acids, calcium and vitamin D, **salmon** lowers blood pressure, improves cognitive functions and helps reduce the risk of heart disease. Eat baked salmon with veggies for lunch or dinner.

Look what we found!

3 great new products for your kitchen



A concoction of herbs and strawberries, The T2 Gorgeous geisha tea is a healthy alternative for your caffeine cravings. Dhs41 at Milk and Honey.



The locally made Ecogreen dish cleaner liquid will make washing up gentle on your plates and the planet, with sparkling clean results. Dhs12, at select supermarkets and markets.



This lemon olive oil adds a citrus flavour and aroma to dishes. Drizzle on top of roasted vegetables and baked chicken for an instant flavour boost. Dhs50, at Carluccio's.



Dalia's tip of the month

Over the years, I have learned to never throw out vanilla pods. Once you have used the seeds, just chuck the pods in your sugar jar and let them infuse. Anything you sweeten, from a coffee, tea or cake will have that beautiful, subtle hint of vanilla sugar.

SMART FOOD SWAPS



Health update > March 8 is International Women's Day. Make it a reason to start following these few nutrition dos and don'ts for female health:

Dos: Eat almonds, broccoli, mushrooms, tomatoes and green tea to help prevent breast cancer, as they are packed with antioxidants, vitamin C, B complex and E, and essential compounds, such as phytosterols, that prevent tumor growth and boost the immune system. Vegetables such as green peas, broccoli, cabbage, spinach, lettuce, asparagus, and grains such as oats are also good for women as they improve absorption of calcium, helping prevent the onset of osteoporosis. Heart-healthy foods such as soy protein (found in tofu and soymilk), whole grains, nuts, and folate-packed vegetables and fruits such as asparagus and oranges are great for digestion, and also help to boost the immune system.

Don'ts: Avoid well-done meats as they contain chemicals that cause damage to DNA and can lead to the development of breast cancer. Also, make sure to refrain from sugar-loaded drinks and salty foods, as they can lead to osteoporosis over time, and can contribute to causing diabetes and high blood pressure as well.

Treasures from the sea

Chef Rosalind Parsk, the new chef de cuisine at Pierchic, Madinat Jumeirah, shows us how to cook three dishes using sustainable seafood.

Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Pan seared diver scallops with pumpkin puree and pine nut salsa

SERVES 4

400g butter nut squash
500ml chicken stock
200g butter, cut into 1cm cube
10g salt
2g pepper

FOR THE PINE NUT SALSA
3 sage leaves, thinly cut
15ml extra virgin olive oil
100g pine nuts, toasted

25g parmesan, grated fine
6g salt
8 pcs scallops, large, fresh and cleaned
15ml vegetable oil
Chervil, picked into leaves
50g butter
½ lemon
Salt and pepper

1 Peel and deseed the squash, then cut into 2cm cubes. Place on a roasting tray with the chicken stock and cover with aluminum foil and in the oven for 30 mins at 180C. Once



Chef Rosalind began her culinary career at The Belvedere in London's Holland Park, headed by Marco Pierre White, right after completing her

culinary education. She then worked for Gordon Ramsay at The Grillroom, The Connaught Hotel in Mayfair, London, and moved to Dubai in May 2007 to broaden her horizons. After gaining experience at Rhodes Mezzanine by Gary Rhodes, Capital Club DIFC and the Cavalli Club, she joined Pierchic in late 2012. Rosalind now heads up the award-winning signature seafood restaurant where she revised and created the menu to offer sustainable seafood options. Here she shares some of the dishes from her new menu that may taste and look like fine dining, but can be easily recreated at home.

pumpkin is soft, remove from stock and keep stock aside. Blend the pumpkin in a food processor on high, adding some of the chicken stock to make it smooth. While blending, slowly add the butter piece-by-piece until finished. Season with salt and pepper and pass through a fine strainer to remove all rough pieces.

2 To make the salsa, combine all ingredients and check for seasoning.

3 In a hot pan, add some vegetable oil. Season the scallops, and cook on high until they start to caramelise. Turn over and continue cooking for 30 secs, add butter and juice of lemon and with a spoon, baste the scallop, remove from heat.

4 To serve, place the heated pumpkin puree on a plate. Place the pine nut salsa on the pumpkin puree, and a bit on each scallop. Serve with salad, if you like.

TIP

Make sure your frying pan is nice and hot before you put your scallops in the pan, this will help you get a good colour on your scallops.



Crispy organic salmon with parsnip puree, braised puy lentils and watercress salad

SERVES 4

400g parsnip
500ml milk
1 small sprig of thyme
2 bay leaves
1 clove of garlic, peeled
100g butter cut into 1cm cube
10g salt
2g pepper
20ml olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 celery stick, finely diced
1 carrot, finely diced
150g puy lentils, rinsed
3 fresh thyme sprigs
400ml vegetable stock
Squeeze of lemon juice
Extra-virgin olive oil, to taste
4 pcs of 175g salmon fillet
50g butter
15ml vegetable oil
Watercress, picked
15ml olive oil
Salt and pepper

1 To make the puree, place the parsnip chunks in a heavy based saucepan with the milk, bay leaves, thyme and garlic. Simmer and cook for 25 mins, or until parsnips are tender. Remove the bay leaves and thyme sprig and ladle the parsnips and milk into a blender – do this in

batches. Puree the parsnips until they reach a smooth and silky consistency. Return the puree to a clean pan and season with salt and pepper. Stir in the butter until melted.

2 Heat the olive oil in a wide saucepan over a medium heat. Add the chopped onion, celery and carrot and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 mins or until the onion is beginning to soften. Stir in the lentils, so they're coated in the oil and cooking juices, add the thyme sprigs and hot stock. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15-20 mins or until the lentils are tender but still holding their shape, and the stock is absorbed. Add a dash of boiling water if the lentils look dry during cooking. Discard the thyme sprigs and stir the lemon juice and extra-virgin olive oil into the lentils and adjust the seasoning.

3 Deep fry some parsnip slices.

4 Heat a frying pan until hot, add the butter, then fry the salmon for 2 mins on each side. Place the heated parsnip puree and lentils onto the plate. Top with the cooked salmon. Dress the watercress in some olive oil and place on top of the salmon fillet. Add the parsnip slice on top of the watercress salad, and serve.

TIP

Cook the seabass mostly on the skin side, so it gets nice and crispy. Once the fish is nearly cooked, turn over and continue to cook on the other side.

Pan fried sea bass, braised savoy cabbage, veal bacon and sweet corn puree

SERVES 4

3 fresh corn cobs
40g butter
¼ medium onion, chopped finely
1 clove garlic, crushed
80ml milk
160ml cream
55g butter
110g veal bacon, chopped
1 Savoy cabbage, cored and shredded
2 tbsp fresh chopped parsley
2 tbsp cream
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 fillets sea bass
50g butter
½ lemon
Salt and pepper
30g yellow frisse salad leaves
15g mixed cresses (available at Spinneys)

1 Cut the kernels from the corn cobs with a sharp knife. Heat the butter in a medium pan, add onion and garlic and cook, stirring over a low heat until onion is soft but not coloured. Stir in the corn and milk and cream. Bring to the boil then simmer, uncovered, until soft, for about 20 mins. Blend the corn mixture until smooth then push through a sieve. Season to taste.

2 Melt the butter in a large pan. Add the bacon and cook for 3-4 mins. Add the cabbage and mix all together. Season well, cover and cook gently for 10 mins until the cabbage is tender. Stir in cream and parsley, slightly reduce cream and serve.

3 Heat a frying pan until hot, add butter then add the sea bass and fry on each side for 2 mins. Place the heated sweet corn puree and braised cabbage onto the plate. Add the yellow frisse, mixed cresses and dress it with some olive oil and put it on top of the seabass. [GF](#)





Learn to: Make a beef wellington



Ian Rudge from The Rib Room Bar and Restaurant at Jumeirah CarltonTower hotel in London creates a stunning, Easter-entertaining centrepiece, with a step-by-step guide.

Photographs DAVID MUNNS



Ian Rudge is head chef at The Rib Room Bar and Restaurant. He previously worked at the one Michelin-starred Northcote Manor and the two-Michelin-starred Whatley Manor. The Rib Room Bar and Restaurant at the Jumeirah CarltonTower hotel, Knightsbridge, has recently been revamped, along with its menu, which highlights modern British classics (theribroom.co.uk).

Beef wellington

SERVES 6 • 1 HOUR 45 MINUTES **A little effort**

At The Rib Room, we finish the wellington with a second pastry lattice layer. You can buy a pastry lattice wheel cutter from directtableware.com or decorate it with trimmings if you prefer.

1kg centre cut fillet of beef piece, trimmed
olive oil
Dijon mustard for brushing

100g shallots, finely diced
2 sprigs thyme leaves from
50g butter
200g chestnut mushrooms, finely diced
200g button mushrooms, finely diced
45g brioche breadcrumbs
80g duck or chicken livers, finely chopped
80g bone marrow, diced (optional)
500g puff pastry block, plus 250g extra if you are making the lattice decoration

3 egg yolks, beaten, for brushing and glazing
FOR THE PANCAKES

200g plain flour

2 eggs medium

500ml milk

10g chives, chopped

1 To make the pancakes, mix the flour and eggs together then gradually whisk in the milk to make a batter. Season, then stir in the chives.

Heat a non-stick frying pan with a little oil, then add a small amount of mix to the pan, moving the pan so that it covers the surface. When the underside is light golden, turn and cook the other side. Repeat. You will need 3-4 pancakes.

2 Season the fillet well, then sear all over in a hot pan with a little oil. Cool, then brush with a thin layer of Dijon mustard.

3 To make the mushroom duxelles, cook the shallots and thyme in a pan with 2 tsp of oil. Once softened, add the butter and mushrooms and continue cooking on a high heat until the mushrooms are just cooked. Tip onto a sheet of kitchen paper and leave to dry out for 20 minutes. Tip into a bowl, add the breadcrumbs, livers and bone marrow (if using). Season and mix together.

4 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan. Roll out the puff pastry to around 3mm thickness on a floured bench.

5 Spread the duxelle mix all over the top and sides of the meat, trying to get a nice even covering (you don't need to do the bottom).

6 Arrange the pancakes, slightly overlapping, then put the beef on top. Bring the pancakes up and around to cover the beef, being careful not to disturb the duxelle too much. Brush all over with some egg yolk (this will help the pastry stick to the beef and pancakes and cut down on air bubbles).

7 Sit the wrapped beef on one end of the pastry then roll, getting rid of as much air as possible. Brush the long edge with egg and seal, making sure the seal goes underneath. Fold and crimp both ends to seal.

8 Glaze the pastry with egg, then roll out the second piece, cut a pattern and drape over the top. Trim to fit, then glaze with more egg.

9 Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan. Cook the wellington for 30 minutes for rare, 35-40 for medium rare. Turn the wellington halfway through for even cooking. Leave to rest for 10-15 minutes before carving.

Per serving 1,037 kcs, protein 56.3g, carbs 75.9g, fat 56.2g, sat fat 26.1g, fibre 2.2g, salt 1.7g



1 Sear the fillet all over in a hot pan, then cool and brush with a thin layer of mustard.



2 Spread the mushroom mix evenly all over the top and sides of the fillet.



3 Arrange pancakes on the work surface, slightly overlapping. You'll need enough to wrap the fillet entirely, approx 3-4, depending on size.



4 Roll the fillet in the pancakes, tucking in the edges as you go until it is completely covered. Brush the outside all over with beaten egg yolk.



5 Roll the covered fillet in a sheet of pastry, brush the long end with egg and seal.



6 Crimp the edges and fold in to seal. Glaze all over with egg yolk.




7 Using a lattice cutter, cut a pattern in a second, smaller piece of pastry.



8 Drape the lattice over the top of the wellington, gently pulling it to open out the pattern.



9 Trim the lattice to fit the wellington and glaze well with beaten egg before baking. 



New beginnings

Deff Haupt, the new culinary director of Kempinski Hotel and Residences Palm Jumeirah, takes us through the exciting changes and menus he plans to implement at the hotel.



join one day before the competition, and even though I went ahead without any practice, I won it! This led me to the German championship finals, where I placed third.

How did your career grow from there?

After three years, it was time for me to do my military service. The head chef of Hotel Mainz made me realise that I was meant to be in this field, and offered to send me to France after my service. I took his advice, and after my time with the military, I went to France to join a two-Michelin star restaurant, which later received a third Michelin star while I worked there. I was here for two years, and then joined a restaurant close to Lyon. This is where I learnt how to work with high-quality ingredients and fresh produce. After France, I spent six years in Chile and Brazil, six years in Berlin and six years in Canada with Sofitel. I then moved with Sofitel to open their hotel in Abu Dhabi, and joined Kempinski Hotel and Residences, Palm Jumeirah, late last year.

What plans do you have for Brunello restaurant?

There's a lot going on in this hotel, and one of my main aims for Brunello is for people to enjoy authentic Italian cuisine. We cook and work exactly like the Italians do. For instance we use shredded meat instead of minced meat in bolognese sauce. When guests dine here, I want them to get a taste of an Italian grandmother's cooking.

How do you choose the produce for your dishes at Brunello?

My head chef and I go to the markets. We recently made a trip to Abu Dhabi to a farm,

With more than 30 years in the culinary field, Deff Haupt, the new culinary director of Kempinski Hotel and Residences, Palm Jumeirah brings an extensive amount of experience to his role. He started this career in Germany – his native country – but has since worked in France, South America and Canada. Deff has had the pleasure of serving Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, among other celebrities, and has previously worked with three-star Michelin chefs such as Paul Bocuse, and Emile Jung. Here, he shares his plans for Brunello, the hotel's signature fine-dining restaurant.

How did you begin your culinary career?

I had to leave school at the age of 15. So, one day I approached my parents and told them I wanted to do an apprenticeship. They had been in the hotel industry for more than 25 years and thought I was crazy. My first apprenticeship was in Hilton Mainz, where I worked for three years. One of the head chefs there was literally Gordon Ramsay, times five! He used to push me a lot, and made me take part in competitions such as the junior championship of Mainz, which I won. After a few months, the regionals were going on, and I remember being told to



where we tasted fresh burrata and mozzarella cheese, which tastes exactly like the cheese available in Italy. We like to use fresh, good quality produce in all our dishes – if it's from here in the region, then it's even better.

Why do you think it is important to use produce from the region?

As a chef, I try to be conscious about the foods I choose to cook with, whether at home or in the kitchen. I feel it is more economical to cook with vegetables from, say, Oman and Lebanon. There is great produce available in these regions.

What is your take on the issue of endangered fish species and the use of sustainable fish?

All the fish we cook with is sustainable. I don't use hammour, even though it is popular here, and if I do get a request for it, I speak to the guest and try to make them understand why I don't use this fish. So far, they have been very reasonable and respect our decision, which is great. It's important to raise awareness amongst people, so that they can pass on the message to others.

What changes have you made at the restaurant. Could you take us through the new menu at Brunello, what are some of its highlights?

The food at Brunello is as authentic as possible. I would never put a dish on the menu that I don't enjoy myself. Some of the signature dishes are the tortellini ricotta filled with spinach and black truffle and covered in lemon sauce; mozzarella ravioli; homemade pastas; black cod and salmon tartare – which is not completely Italian, but close, as we use Mediterranean fruits such as apples and avocados. Our carpaccios are also quite popular with the guest, and we have added a slight contemporary influence to it, by adding foam on top.

Is there anything on the menu you would like recommend to guests in particular?

The pastas, as we make the sauce as authentic as possible. For instance with alfredo sauce, it is not just a heavy cream sauce, but actually made with a little olive oil or butter, garlic and salt and pepper. However, when we see who is ordering

it, we do make a few changes, to suit their taste. We know that certain guests who come to dine might be expecting the alfredo sauce they are used to being served elsewhere, so we speak to them, tell them what the authentic sauce is like, and ask them if they are interested in trying the traditional version instead.

Could you tell me about what other plans you have for Brunello, going forward?

Within the course of the year we will be doing masterclasses at our open kitchen in Brunello, for around 10-12 people per session, where guests will learn how to cook authentic Italian cuisine. I feel people don't cook as much as they used to, and if they learn Italian cooking, they will know how simple and easy it is to make. We will be inviting an Italian chef, this summer, so that guests can get an authentic experience.

What other culinary offerings does the hotel have for guests?

We have a private dining area in our cabanas on the beach, as well as a barbecue set menu, where guests can enjoy Wagyu roast, angus flank, grilled meats, seafood and chicken out on the terrace or in the gardens. We want guests to start seeing this as a chilled out, relaxed lounge destination. We are installing a dance floor at the moment, and will hire a DJ as well. We also do catering for weddings, and work closely with guests to create a menu they want for their memorable day. Apart from this, we do catering for private events in our suites and penthouses.

www.kempinski.com/palm-jumeirah



Relax! It's Friday...

Great ideas for when you want something simple but special to celebrate the weekend.

Vegetable pad Thai

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 20 MINS **Easy**

200g pack thick rice noodles
Bunch of coriander
2 cloves of garlic
3cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled
1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 yellow pepper, deseeded and thinly sliced
40g sugar snap peas
1 egg, beaten
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
1 tbsp caster sugar

3 tbsp fish sauce
2 tbsp oyster sauce
100g beansprouts
Juice of 1 lime
50g roasted peanuts, roughly chopped
bunch of spring onions, thinly sliced

1 Cook the noodles according to pack instructions. Cut the stalks off the coriander and finely chop them (set the leaves aside for later). Tip the chopped stalks into a mortar with the garlic and ginger, then pound to make a paste.
2 Heat a wok and, when smoking, tip in the oil then the paste. Cook for a few secs, then stir in the pepper and peas.

Cook for a few mins more until softened, then pour in the egg and chilli. Stir until cooked, then add the sugar, fish and oyster sauces. Drain the noodles, then add to the pan.

3 Toss everything together, adding a little water if the noodles seem a bit dry. Just before serving, stir in the beansprouts and lime juice. Place on a serving plate and scatter over the roasted peanuts, spring onions and coriander leaves.

PER SERVING 352 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 54g, fat 12g, sat fat 2g, fibre 2g, sugar 10g, salt 3.08g

Steak with skinny sweet potato fries

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS •

COOK 25 MINS **Easy** 🍷

2 sweet potatoes, scrubbed
2 tbsp olive oil
2 shallots, chopped
2 tsp white wine vinegar
2 tsp hazelnuts, toasted and chopped
2 tbsp tarragon chopped
3 tbsp flat-leaf parsley chopped
2 lean fillet steaks

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Cut the sweet potatoes into thin chips and put on a large non-stick baking tray. Drizzle with ½ tbsp olive oil and some seasoning and toss to coat – spread them out so they crisp properly. Bake for 20 mins, or until golden at the edges.

2 Meanwhile, put the shallots and vinegar in a bowl and leave for 5 mins. Add the nuts, tarragon, half the parsley, some salt and 1½ tbsp olive oil.

3 Oil and season the steaks and griddle or pan-fry for 3 mins each side for medium rare. Rest for 5 mins in foil. When the chips are done, sprinkle with parsley and serve with the steaks, sauce and a crisp green salad, if you like.

PER SERVING 513 kcals, protein 36g, carbs 44g, fat 23g, sat fat 6g, fibre 6g, sugar 12g, salt 0.41g >>





Easy mezze plate

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 MINS ● NO COOK

Easy P

280g jar marinated artichoke hearts in oil, drained

Handful flat leaf parsley

100g feta, roughly chopped

Juice of 1 lemon

5 tbsp olive oil

100g bag wild rocket

85g pack Serrano or Parma ham

Focaccia or flatbread, toasted or griddled

1 Make an artichoke dip by whizzing together the artichoke hearts, parsley, feta, half the lemon juice and 3 tbsp olive oil in a food processor. Blitz to a smooth paste, then spoon into a bowl.

2 Dress the rocket with the remaining olive oil and lemon juice. Pile onto a platter and serve with the ham, the dip and toast.

PER SERVING 476 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 24g, fat 35g, sat fat 8g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 3.46g

Lamb steaks with hummous new potatoes

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 MINS ● COOK 20 MINS **Easy**

500g new potatoes

2 lamb leg steaks

1 tsp olive oil

Bunch of cherry tomatoes, on the vine

3 tbsp hummous

10 pitted green olives, roughly chopped

Small handful flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 Cook the potatoes in boiling salted water for 15 mins or until tender.

Meanwhile, heat the grill or a griddle pan. When the potatoes are almost ready, season the lamb steaks, rub with a little oil, then grill or griddle for 3-4 mins on each side until they are cooked to your liking, adding the tomatoes halfway through until juicy and bursting. **2** When the potatoes are ready, drain well, then return to the pan and gently crush with a fork or potato masher. Stir through the hummous, olives and parsley, then season well. Serve with the lamb and the tomatoes.

PER SERVING 552 kcals, protein 46g, carbs 43g, fat 23g, sat fat 7g, fibre 5g, sugar 5g, salt 1.70g

TIP You can adapt this recipe to make a **Chickpea & potato salad**: Cook 300g new potatoes as above, then drain and cool. Mix with the houmous, olives and parsley plus 100ml natural yoghurt, a 410g can drained chickpeas, 2 sliced spring onions and some seasoning. Serve with lamb steaks or grilled koftas.



**Lamb with carrot
& fennel salad**

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 15 MINS **Easy**

450g lamb neck fillet

1 tbsp olive oil

Juice of 1 lime

1 tbsp fennel seeds, toasted and

roughly crushed

1 carrot, grated

1 small red onion, finely chopped

4 pita breads

2 Little Gem lettuces, leaves separated

1 Rub the lamb with a little oil and half the lime juice, then season with salt and pepper. Barbecue or cook in a hot griddle pan for 10-15 mins, turning occasionally. Remove from the heat, cover with foil and set aside to rest.

2 Meanwhile, whisk the remaining lime juice and the fennel seeds together with some salt and pepper and a little olive oil in a large bowl. Add the carrot and red onion, then mix well.

3 Warm the pita breads on the barbecue or griddle pan, then make a slit in each to form a pocket. Slice the lamb and stuff into the pitas with the carrot salad and lettuce leaves.

PER SERVING 272 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 4g, fat 19g, sat fat 9g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 0.17 g >>



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Steak & caramelised onion sandwich

SERVES 2 • PREP 5 MINS • COOK 5 MINS **Easy**

4 minute steaks or 2 x 1cm thick sirloin steaks

1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

1 small ciabatta loaf

4 tbsp caramelised onions

85g watercress

1 Heat the grill. Heat a little oil in a frying pan. Season both sides of the steaks with salt, then fry for 1-2 mins on each side. Halve the ciabatta lengthways and grill the cut sides until golden.

2 Drizzle the toasted ciabatta with olive oil, spread the bottom half with the onions and sit the steaks on top. Cover with the watercress and close the sandwich with the other half of the ciabatta. Cut into four sandwiches and serve two per person. Serve hot.

PER SERVING 615 kJ, protein 30g, carbs 61g, fat 30g, sat fat 7g, fibre 3g, sugar 15g, salt 1.72g **GF**

TIP You could use basil, lemon or rosemary oil instead of olive oil and replace the caramelised onions with a few roasted peppers from a jar.

SEAFOOD STORY

Chef Paul Kerr, the new Chef de Cuisine at Amwaj restaurant, Shangri-La Dubai is planning to take the restaurant in a different direction with the launch of a revamped new menu. He reveals the details and shares one of his signature recipes.



Please tell us a little bit about your background in the culinary industry?

I have been in the catering industry for over 15 years. I started in a small hotel on the Isle of Lewis on the north-west coast of Scotland. I soon moved from the island to train in an Italian restaurant in Glasgow, which was a good foundation to start to learn basics. After a few years, I started to work in more fine dining restaurants which I found more challenging and creative. I have worked as a sous chef in some good 2- and 3-Rosette restaurants in the UK, and I also spent a little time in Michelin starred restaurants before moving here to Dubai.

What are your plans for Amwaj restaurant, and what do you want to offer guests?

I hope to make Amwaj a place where people come for good food and a relaxed atmosphere. I don't want it to be a formal, fine dining restaurant, but want to offer a touch of fine dining with a bistro atmosphere and price. I would like people to feel comfortable and leave happy with their experience in Amwaj, which will hopefully make them return.

Could you share some details on the new menu you will be introducing?

I have developed the new menu in line with the bistro way of thinking. Some of the dishes are ones that I have had in other restaurants, which I've tweaked slightly for Amwaj. Some others I have come up with purely for this new menu. While the focus is on seafood, there will be non seafood options as well. Examples of what guests can expect in the new menu include Butter poached lobster with curry lentils, coconut, golden raisins, coriander; Tuna tartar with soft boiled quail egg, capers, gherkins and shallot; Scallops with cauliflower, cumin, capers and golden raisins; and Corn fed chicken with morel mushrooms, pickled carrot, asparagus and crispy chicken skin.



Smoked haddock chowder

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

400g smoked haddock
120g potato
80g leek
80g shallots
4 quail egg
200ml cream
200ml milk
600ml fish stock
2g salt
2g black pepper
20g unsalted butter
40ml vegetable oil
8g sliced spring onion
20 ml lemon juice

METHOD

1 Peel and dice the potato. Wash and finely slice the leek. Finely dice the shallot.

2 Sweat the potato, leek and shallot in the butter and oil in a medium size pot, till soft. Season with a little of the salt and pepper.

3 Add the 90g of the diced smoked haddock and sweat for 2-3 mins more. Add the milk, cream and fish stock and simmer for 15-20 mins.

4 Blend soup till smooth, add a squeeze of lemon juice and season to taste,

5 Poach the remaining 10g of smoked haddock in a little milk.

6 Boil the quail egg for 2mins 25sec then place in ice water till cool.

7 Peel the egg and cut the top off to reveal the soft yolk, place the flakes of poached haddock in the centre of a bowl.

8 Place egg on top of haddock. Pour hot soup around the haddock and egg and garnish with finely sliced spring onion.

Bake your Mum a treat

Glamorous homemade cupcakes are the perfect way to turn Mother's Day into a special OCCASION. Recipes SARAH COOK Photographs PETER CASSIDY



Pistachio cupcakes

MAKES 12 • PREP 25 MINS •
COOK 22-25 MINS **Easy** **UN-ICED**

100g pistachios
140g golden caster sugar
140g butter, very soft
2 eggs
140g self-raising flour
5 tbsp milk
Edible glitter, to decorate
FOR THE ICING
250g icing sugar, sifted
Mint green food colouring

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. Put 85g pistachios into a food processor with about half the sugar, then whizz until very finely chopped. Tip into a large mixing bowl with the remaining sugar, butter, eggs, flour and milk and beat until smooth. Divide between cases, then bake on a low shelf for 22-25 mins until a skewer poked in comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

2 For the icing, mix just enough water into the icing sugar to get a very thick but still runny icing – just add 1 tbsp of

water at a time. Stir in enough food colouring to give a pretty, pale green colour. If any cakes poke above the top of the cases, trim with a small knife, or scoop out with a teaspoon – being very careful not to release any of the case from the sides of the cake. Put a generous spoonful of icing on each cake and let it gently spread to cover. Chop the remaining pistachios and scatter these over with a pinch of edible glitter. Set, then serve.

PER SERVING 326 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 45g, fat 16g, sat fat 7, fibre none, sugar 36g, salt 0.34g



Lemon & poppyseed cupcakes

MAKES 12 EASILY DOUBLED ●

PREP 40 MINS PLUS COOLING ●

COOK 20-22 MINS

A little effort ❄️ UN-ICED

225g self raising flour

175g golden caster sugar

Zest of 2 lemons

1 tbsp poppy seeds, toasted

3 eggs

100g natural yogurt

175g butter, melted and cooled a little

FOR THE ICING

225g butter, softened

400g icing sugar, sifted

Juice of 1 lemon

Few drops of yellow food colouring

Icing flowers or yellow sprinkles

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cupcake or muffin cases. Mix the flour, sugar, lemon zest and poppy seeds together in a large mixing bowl. Beat the eggs into the yoghurt, then tip this into the dry ingredients with the melted butter. Mix together with a wooden spoon or whisk until lump-free, then divide between the cases. Bake for 20-22 mins until a skewer poked in comes out clean – the cakes will be quite pale on top still. Cool for 5 mins in the tin, then carefully lift onto a wire rack to finish cooling.

2 To ice, beat the softened butter until really soft in a large bowl, then gradually beat in the icing sugar and lemon juice. Stir in enough food colouring for a pale lemon colour, then spoon the icing into a piping bag with a large star nozzle.

3 Ice one cake at a time, holding the piping bag almost upright with the nozzle about 1cm from the surface of the cake. Pipe one spiral of icing around the edge, then pause to break the flow before moving the nozzle towards the centre slightly and piping a second, smaller spiral that continues until there are no gaps in the centre. Slightly 'dot' the nozzle into the icing as you stop squeezing to finish neatly. Repeat to cover all the cakes, then top with sugar decorations or scatter with sprinkles.

PER SERVING 529 kcal, protein 4g, carbs 66g, fat 30g, sat fat 18g, fibre 1g, sugar 51g, salt 0.75g >>

Adapt the recipe

Simply swap the lemon zest for **zest of 1 orange** in the cakes, and the juice in the icing for juice of **½ orange**. Add **orange food colouring** and decorate as before.

“Cupcakes are so versatile – you can make the decorations as intricate or as simple as you like, and create toppings to suit everybody's tastes.”

- Sarah Cook



Carrot & cream cheese cupcakes

MAKES 12 • PREP 30 MINS PLUS COOLING • COOK 20-22 MINS

Easy UN-ICED

175g light brown muscovado sugar

100g wholemeal self-raising flour

100g self-raising flour

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 tsp mixed spice

Zest of 1 orange

2 eggs

150ml sunflower oil

200g carrots, grated

Orange coloured sprinkles, to decorate

FOR THE ICING

100g butter, softened

300g soft cheese

100g icing sugar, sifted

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. In a large mixing bowl, mix the sugar, flours, bicarbonate of soda, mixed spice and orange zest. Whisk together the eggs and oil, then stir into the dry ingredients with the grated carrot. Divide the mixture between cases and bake for 20-22 mins until a skewer poked in comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack before icing.

2 For the icing, beat the butter until really soft, then beat in the soft cheese, icing sugar and vanilla. Use a palette or cutlery knife to swirl the icing on top of the cakes, then sprinkle with decorations.

PER SERVING 442 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 38g, fat 32g, sat fat 14g, fibre 2g, sugar 26g, salt 0.70g

DID YOU KNOW? ♦

These cupcakes are inspired by the Louise cake – a thin layer of cake or biscuit topped with raspberry jam and coconut meringue – a favourite bake in New Zealand and Australia.



Little Louise cupcakes

MAKES 12 • PREP 30 MINS • COOK 50 MINS-1 HR **A little effort** BEFORE MERINGUE ADDED

175g butter, softened

350g golden or white caster sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

5 eggs, 4 separated

175g plain flour

1 tsp baking powder

150ml milk

12 tsp raspberry jam (use a firm jam)

85g desiccated coconut

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. In a large mixing bowl beat together the butter, 175g of the sugar and the vanilla extract until light and fluffy. Beat in the whole egg, followed by the 4 yolks, before briefly beating in the flour, baking powder and milk until smooth. Divide two-thirds of the mix evenly between the cases, then top the centre of each with 1 tsp jam. Divide remaining cake mix over the top, using a wet finger to smooth it in place so no jam is visible. Bake for 18-22 mins until a skewer poked into the centre comes out clean. Wait until cool enough to handle, then transfer the cakes to a flat baking sheet.

2 Lower oven to 110C/90C fan. Using a large, clean bowl, beat the 4 egg whites until stiff, then continue whisking while you gradually add the remaining 175g sugar. Beat until thick and shiny, then fold in the coconut and use spoonfuls of the mixture to top each cake. Bake for 30-35 mins until the outside of the meringue is crisp, then cool before serving.

PER SERVING 374 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 47g, fat 20g, sat fat 12g, fibre 1g, sugar 36g, salt 0.44g >>

Chocolate fudge cupcakes

MAKES 12 • PREP 30 MINS PLUS
COOLING • COOK 25-30 MINS

Easy UN-ICED

200g butter

200g plain chocolate (under 70%
cocoa solids is fine)

200g light, soft brown sugar

2 eggs, beaten

1 tsp vanilla extract

250g self-raising flour

Smarties, sweets and sprinkles,
to decorate

FOR THE ICING

200g plain chocolate, see above

100ml double cream, not fridge-cold

50g icing sugar

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. Gently melt the butter, chocolate, sugar and 100ml hot water together in a large saucepan, stirring occasionally, then set aside to cool a little while you weigh the other ingredients.

2 Stir the eggs and vanilla into the chocolate mixture. Put the flour into a large mixing bowl, then stir in the chocolate mixture until smooth. Spoon into cases until just over three-quarters full (you may have a little mixture leftover), then set aside for 5 mins before putting on a low shelf in the oven and baking for 20-22 mins. Leave to cool.

3 For the icing, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water. Once melted, turn off the heat, stir in the double cream and sift in the icing sugar. When spreadable, top each cake with some and decorate with your favourite sprinkles and sweets.

PER SERVING 505 kcal, protein 5g, carbs 59g, fat 29g, sat fat 17g, fibre 2g, sugar 44g, salt 0.51g



Sweet like chocolate



Stunning dessert
for a crowd

Two special chocolate recipes that
are guaranteed to impress, whether
it's for a party or just the two of you.

RECIPES ANNIE RIGG Photographs PETER CASSIDY

Chocolate tiramisu cake

SERVES 10-12 • PREP 1 HR PLUS
COOLING AND CHILLING • COOK
30-35 MINS **A little effort**

*This cake has the wow factor and would
be ideal for a celebration meal, as most
of it can be prepared the day before.*

FOR THE CAKE

50g butter, plus extra for the tins

4 large eggs

140g caster sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

100g plain flour

25g cocoa

½ tsp baking powder

FOR THE FILLING

1 tbsp demerara sugar

75ml hot espresso or strong rich coffee

4 large egg yolks

75g caster sugar

125ml Marsala

200g white chocolate, half chopped,
half grated

500g tub mascarpone

200g dark chocolate, grated

1 tbsp cocoa

1 For the cakes, heat oven to 180C/
160C fan. Butter and line 2 x 20cm
sandwich tins. Melt the butter and
allow to cool slightly. Put the eggs,
sugar and vanilla into a bowl and whisk
for about 8 mins or until the mixture is
pale, thick and has trebled in volume.

2 Sift the flour, cocoa, baking powder
and a pinch of salt over the egg
mixture, then gently fold together.
Pour the cooled butter around the
edge of the bowl and fold in until
fully incorporated. Divide the batter
between the prepared tins and bake
for 10-12 mins or until a skewer
inserted into the middle of the cakes
comes out clean. Allow to cool in the
tins for a few mins, then transfer to a
wire rack to cool completely.

3 Meanwhile, make the filling. Dissolve
the sugar in the coffee and set aside.
Put the egg yolks, sugar and Marsala
into a heatproof bowl, then set over a
large pan of simmering water. Whisk
for 5 mins until the mixture is thick and
has trebled in volume – make sure the
mixture is really thick. Remove from

the heat and take the bowl off the pan.
Keep whisking until the mixture is cool.

4 Melt the chopped white chocolate
in the microwave on Low and allow
to cool slightly. Meanwhile, beat the
mascarpone until smooth, then fold
into the egg mixture with the cooled
white chocolate.

5 Slice the cakes in half horizontally.
Place one layer in the bottom of a
20cm springform tin. Brush with the
coffee syrup and spread with 3 tbsp of
the mascarpone mixture. Scatter with
1 tbsp grated dark chocolate, then
repeat until you end with the fourth
layer of cake. Cover with cling film and
chill for at least 2 hrs along with the
remaining mascarpone mixture.

6 Remove the tin and put the cake
on a serving plate, then cover with the
remaining mascarpone mixture. Mix
the remaining dark chocolate with the
grated white chocolate and press
carefully onto the sides of the cake.
Dust the top with cocoa.

PER SERVING (12) 563 kcs, protein 9g, carbs 47g,
fat 36g, sat fat 22g, fibre 1g, sugar 41g, salt 0.3g



Treat for two

Chocolate & banana French toast

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 8 MINS **Easy**

This is an indulgence for when you're feeling in the need of a quick chocolate fix. If you prefer, you could use dark chocolate to make it less sweet.

1 ripe banana

75g milk chocolate, chopped

4 slices crusty white bread from a round loaf

3 medium eggs

1 tbsp double cream

1 tbsp maple syrup

1 tsp vanilla extract

25g unsalted butter

ground cinnamon, to serve

icing sugar or extra maple syrup, to serve (optional)

1 Slice the banana into a small bowl and mash using a fork. Add the chopped chocolate and mix to combine.

2 Lay 2 slices of bread on the work surface. Divide the chocolate and banana mixture between them, spreading it almost to the edges. Top each with a second slice of bread and press together to make a sandwich.

3 In a shallow dish, whisk together the eggs, double cream, maple syrup and vanilla extract. Melt the butter in a large frying pan over a medium heat. Lay one sandwich into the egg mixture to coat one side, then carefully flip it over so that both sides of the sandwich are soaked in the egg. Lower the sandwich into the hot frying pan and cook for about 1 min on each side, until golden brown and the chocolate has started to melt. Repeat with the second sandwich. Cut the sandwiches in half to serve and sprinkle with a little ground cinnamon and either icing sugar or extra maple syrup if you're feeling super-indulgent.

PER SERVING 648 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 59g, fat 38g, sat fat 21g, fibre 2g, sugar 38g, salt 0.9g

WHICH CHOCOLATE TO USE?

The percentage given on packs of chocolate refers to the amount of cocoa solids – it's the combination of cocoa solids and sugar that determines the flavour. The higher the percentage, the better the quality, but also the more bitter – bear this in mind if your recipe has no added sugar.

• **Dark chocolate** For a strong-flavoured dark chocolate, choose a minimum of 70 per cent. Different brands have different flavours, so if you find one you like, stick to it – but most premium dark chocolate brands are fine.

• **Milk chocolate** Cocoa solids range between 20-40 per cent – for a stronger flavour, go for the higher percentage.

• **White chocolate** Strictly speaking, this isn't really chocolate, as it contains cocoa butter rather than cocoa solids – which makes it very sweet. Because it's so high in fat, you need to melt it very gently.

The London Dairy dessert series

#3 Sweet Mexico

Ruben Herrera Aguilera, chef de cuisine at Maya-Modern Mexican Kitchen and Lounge, Le Royal Meridien Beach Resort and Spa in Dubai, shares a traditional Mexican dessert that complements the nutty flavour of chocolate hazelnut ice cream.

Flan de coco (coconut custard)

SERVES 4

150g white sugar, for caramel
400g white sugar
250 ml coconut milk
170ml whipping cream
5 eggs
5 ml vanilla essence
150g coconut, shredded
2g salt
80g mixed berries

- 1 Preheat oven to 175C.
- 2 Place 150g of sugar in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook gently, without stirring, but shaking occasionally until the sugar has completely melted, and turned golden brown. Pour into a large glass baking dish and spread the caramel evenly over the bottom of the dish. Then set aside to cool for 15 mins for the caramel to harden.
- 3 Blend the coconut milk, whipping cream, eggs, vanilla, coconut, salt and the remaining sugar for 3 mins or until smooth. Pour over the hardened caramel, in the baking dish.
- 4 Bake in preheated oven for 45 mins until set. When done, remove from oven and let cool for 30 mins. Run a knife around the edges of the dish to loosen the sides, and refrigerate overnight.
- 5 Serve cold, garnished with mixed berries and a scoop of the chocolate hazelnut ice cream.

Next month,
look out for the recipe with
Mocha almond fudge ice cream



MEET THE CHEF



Mexican chef Ruben Herrera Aguilera moved to the US in 1993, where he worked in small restaurants in New Jersey, before getting his big break in Richard Sandoval's kitchen, as a Sous Chef at Maya in New York in 1999. Ruben has been with Richard Sandoval for over 13 years and joined Maya-Modern Mexican Kitchen and Lounge, at Le Royal Méridien Beach Resort and Spa in Dubai in 2006.

CHEF'S TIP:

"This recipe can be adapted to different flavours by replacing the coconut with tamarind, orange or dulce de leche."

Two other ways to enjoy London Dairy's Chocolate Hazelnut Ice Cream



Serve with Mexican churros and cajeta sauce.



A scoop of the ice cream is delicious with crepes.

 To see a step-by-step video on making this dish, log on to Facebook. [com/bbcgoodfoodme](https://www.facebook.com/bbcgoodfoodme) or [Facebook.com/LondonDairy](https://www.facebook.com/LondonDairy)



Le Royal Méridien Beach Resort & Spa



CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT ICE CREAM

Indulgent and creamy chocolate ice cream with chunky pieces of chopped hazelnut.

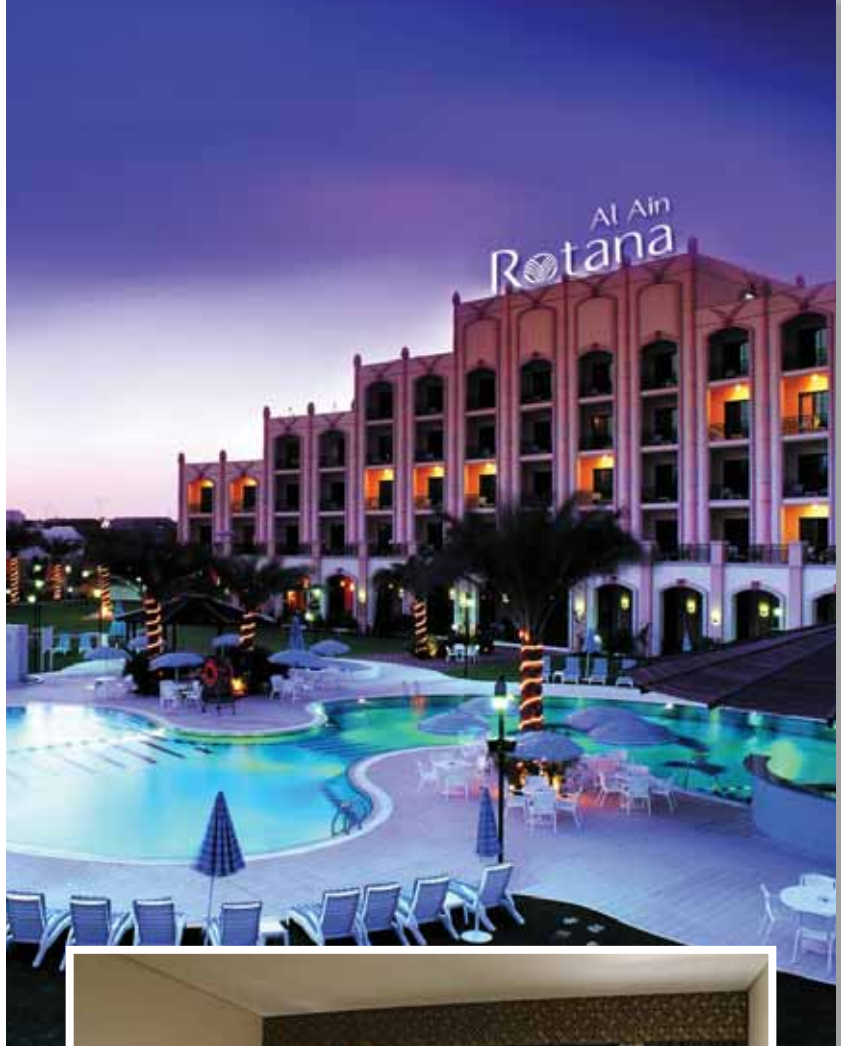


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Get away from the city, to the 5-star Al Ain Rotana hotel, for a relaxed, casual retreat. Located in the heart of the green city, the hotel exudes charm and serenity, with over 198 rooms, suites, chalets and villas, and facilities including squash courts, a swimming pool and a fully-equipped gymnasium. Al Ain Rotana is also home to over six restaurant outlets including Zest – the all-day dining restaurant; Trader Vic's – the popular French Polynesian restaurant; Min Zaman – an Oriental restaurant; and Moodz – a contemporary lounge bar.

The winner gets to enjoy a two-night stay, including breakfast; lunch for two at Trader Vic's; dinner for two at Zest; plus a foot massage for two.



Log on bbcgoodfoodme.com to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

How many rooms does the Al Ain Rotana hotel have?

Scan this QR code
to go straight to
our website. 



*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of Corporate Publishing International are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.



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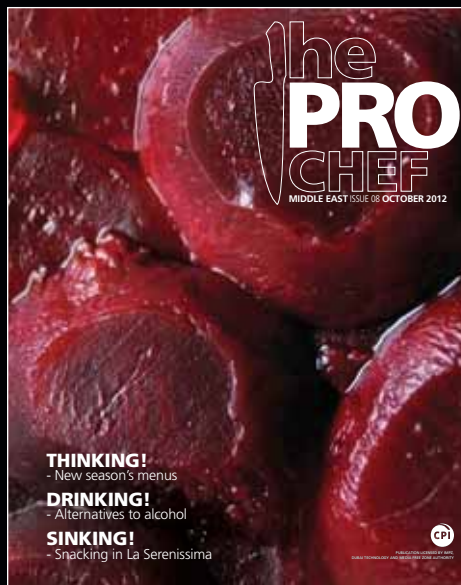
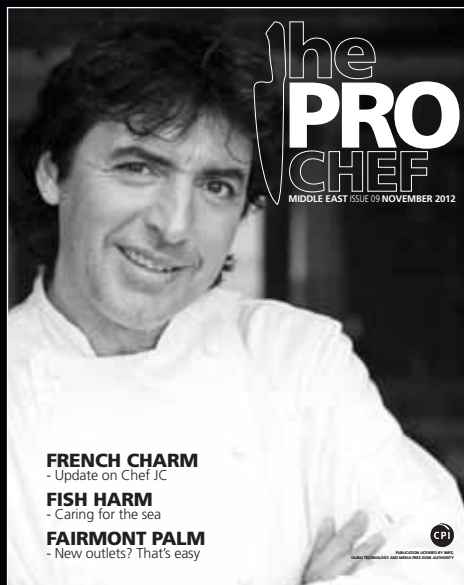


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FISHY business

Which fish should we avoid because they are endangered, and which are OK to eat? Joanna Blythman finds out.

If you feel confused about what fish you can eat with a good conscience, you aren't alone.

Advice seems to change as constantly as the tides. No sooner has one knowledgeable-sounding body convinced us that a certain type of fish is off the menu, then another is telling us that it's back on again. It is possible to enjoy many piscine delights without contributing to species collapse, but some careful navigation is required.

STATE OF THE SEAS

Fish eating has become problematic the world over because technological developments in the fishing industry mean bigger and ever more sophisticated vessels are netting unprecedented catches. Where fishing fleets were once limited by simple boats that mainly stayed within territorial limits, relatively close to shore, we now live in the era of ruthlessly efficient, hi-tech fleets that scour the globe, scooping up massive catches as they go.

It's not just the size of the take that is causing problems – it's the damage many of these ships do in the process. They often trawl right down on the seabed, ploughing up and destroying the marine ecosystem that sustains fish life, and ensnaring a large by-catch of other marine animals. Tuna fishing, for instance, often results in dolphins being trapped in nets and killed.

Between 1950 and 2005, the amount of fish harvested worldwide increased sevenfold, but only 0.6 per cent of the world's oceans benefit from any protection from exploitation by over-fishing. Now we are in an unprecedented situation where 70 per cent of global fish stocks are fully fished, over-fished or depleted. In European waters, nearly 90 per cent of stocks are over-fished.

AQUACULTURE CONTROVERSY

Fish farming of species such as salmon, trout, sea bass, sea bream and tuna is now big business, and often suggested as a solution to dwindling wild stocks. But while environmental groups acknowledge that fish farming practised on a small or traditional scale – such as rope-grown mussels – can provide a useful food source, many are critical of modern, hi-tech aquaculture. The key issue is that farmed fish consume at least three times their weight in feed, which is made out of wild fish from lower down the marine food chain, depleting wild stocks even further. Aquaculture critics also believe that disease and waste from fish farms debase water quality and spread infection throughout the marine ecosystem, again harming wild fish. Aquaculture has also been blamed for environmental destruction. It is estimated, for instance, that 40 per cent of the world's mangroves – watery coastal forest that defends the coast against rising sea levels and tsunamis – have been destroyed to create tropical prawn farms.

RAYS OF HOPE

Against this gloomy backdrop, there is evidence that focused action is beginning to halt the crash in fish stocks, at least in certain places. Stocks of North Sea cod, for instance, once a staple British fish, have declined by 86 per cent in the last 100 years. Stocks were at such a historic low four years ago that many environmental organisations advocated that we should not buy it. The EU imposed strict quotas on the amount of cod that could be landed, the mesh size of the nets was increased to allow young fish to escape and some

boats fitted panels to allow cod to be released when trawlers were fishing for other species. Now cod stocks have revived by 52 per cent, although they are still low by historic standards. The fishing industry is pushing for increased quotas, but environmental groups maintain that it is still too soon to start buying North Sea cod again, arguing that stocks must bounce back further to ensure that this fragile recovery has truly taken hold.

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

While experts continue to debate the pros and cons of eating certain fish, how can we know what to buy and eat? In recent years, guidance on what is sustainable has tended to centre on lists of



photograph GETTY IMAGES

“We are in an unprecedented situation where 70% of global fish stocks are fully fished, over-fished or depleted”



‘good’ species and ‘bad’ species, but this can be confusing, as the same fish can appear on both lists. So, rather than saying that a certain species is off-limits altogether, more attention is now being given to the specific fishery from which it came. For example, scientific surveys suggest that stocks of sole in the Celtic Sea, Western Channel, Skagerrak (between Norway and Sweden) and Kattegat (between Denmark and Sweden) are healthy, but that those in the North Sea, Irish Sea, and Bay of Biscay are not. Similarly, while North Sea cod is still seen by environmentalists as controversial, the same species, fished around Iceland, is widely regarded as coming from a well-managed, sustainable source.

GREEN LABEL APPROVED

All this doesn’t really help, however, when you’re looking at the anonymous fillets on the fishmonger’s slab wondering what’s ok to buy and what’s not. A recent UK survey recently found that four out of five shoppers try to buy sustainable seafood, but are thwarted by lack of clear information. The most practical contribution in recent years has come from the international Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which certifies fisheries as sustainable on a species-by-species basis. This label is a rock in a stormy sea, but as the process of certification involves lots of checks and protocols, there are as yet relatively few MSC-approved fisheries, although many more are due to come on stream. Indeed, there are many types of unlabelled shellfish and fish, which are

often considered by expert bodies to be sustainably fished.

In the UAE, EWS-WWF labels fish with three coloured labels – if it is green, it is a sustainable fish; orange labelled fish are safe to eat but there are better choices available; a red label means a strict no-no.

A DROP IN THE OCEAN

Arguably, destructive over-fishing can only be tackled on a macro scale by inter-governmental bodies employing radical strategies, such as the creation of marine reserves – expanses of water that are closed to fishing for a period to allow fish stocks to regenerate. Evidence from New Zealand, where reserves have been introduced, suggests that stocks start to recover within two to three years, and show significant increases after five or six years. The need for concerted, global efforts to halt the collapse in fish stocks may make the individual action of buying sustainable seafood look like small fry, but these days, every tiddler counts. **GF**

FIVE POINT PLAN TO EATING SUSTAINABLE FISH

1 SEAFOOD TO EAT

For the time being, the following are not considered to be endangered or off-limits. But stocks from certain fisheries may be healthier than others, so give preference to those that offer some indication that they come from sustainable sources: Mackerel (from south-west and English Channel), herring, farmed mussels, oysters, langoustine, brown shrimp, pink North Atlantic prawns, scallops (dived, not trawled), lobster, haddock (from north-east arctic), Alaskan salmon, dab sole, black/sea bream, flounder, line-caught sea bass, Pink Ear Emperor, Ehrenbergs’ Snapper, Yellow Fin Seabream, and Giant Sea Catfish.

2 SEAFOOD TO AVOID

There’s a high risk these species come from endangered stocks – buy if labelled as sustainable: Tuna, monkfish, shark, eel, hake, halibut, hoki, plaice, turbot, wild Atlantic salmon, skate, swordfish. In the local market, orange-spotted grouper

(Hammour), Spangled emperor (shaari) Kingfish and Goldlined seabream are among the endangered.

3 FISH STOCKS

The Marine Stewardship Council (msc.org/cook-eat-enjoy/fish-to-eat), the Marine Conservation Society (fishonline.org/advice/eat), and Greenpeace (greenpeace.org/international/seafood) all have lists you can consult, as does the local EWS-WWF sustainable fish campaign website, choosewisely.ae.

4 SUSTAINABLE SOURCING

Most leading supermarket chains in the UAE have signed up to offer sustainable seafood options, with Union Cooperative and Carrefour outlets leading the charge.

5 ASK QUESTIONS

Gen up on information on sustainability, and question if any restaurant you are dining at is serving fish that is on the red list.

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Go slow!

Nicola Monteath questions whether it's time we started following the Slow Food movement.

Sustainable
choice

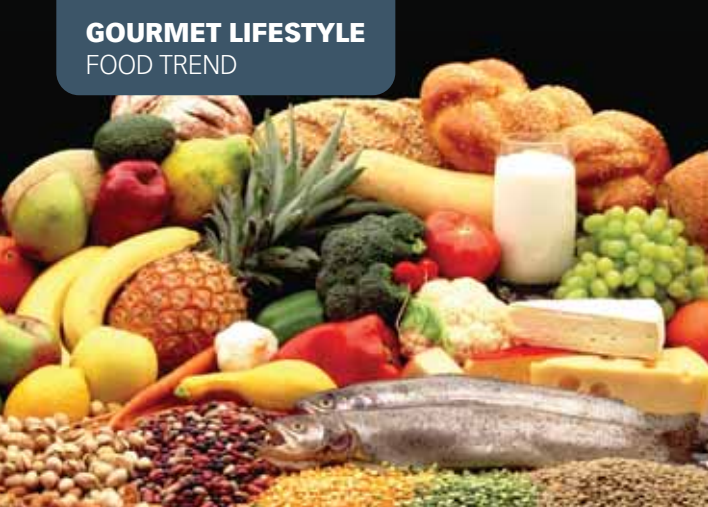
The next time you're stopping at a petrol station to pick up a burger and chips on the go, think about this – the burger patty that seems juicy and tempting may have been prepared in less than two minutes, but it is probably made of genetically modified meat, contains artificial flavouring, preservatives, additives and saturated and trans fats. All of which are damaging to health.

This should make you stop and think, is faster always better? In this era of convenience processed foods, and 'al-desko' eating most of us have forgotten the time-honoured traditions of slow food – and how beneficial it can be to yourself and the planet.

The Slow Food movement raises awareness on high quality produce that is locally sourced, and was initially formed to make people understand the importance of choosing good quality, fresh, local produce, over imported, in order to help local farmers, promote fair-trade and healthy eating. The movement, established by Carlo Petrini in Italy in 1986, first began when Carlo decided it was time for an alternative to the fast food rage that was taking over European countries. At that time, McDonalds had just launched an outlet near the Spanish Steps in Rome, and Carlo and a group of people protested against the opening of this restaurant outlet. It wasn't a protest against the restaurant chain per se, but rather against the concept of promoting fast food.

"Slow Food came about as a reaction to the industrialisation of food and the ability to present food to consumers which has no connection to the area in which it was offered for sale, food which is nameless and has developed for the convenience of the global manufacturers and is to a large extent a travesty of real food as we knew it," explains Yael Mejia, restaurant consultant for Baker & Spice, the sustainable food-focused café which pioneered the concept of Farmers' markets in Dubai.

Over the years, the slow movement has grown globally to have over 100,000 members and chapters – known as 'convivia' in 150 countries. These members, interested in practicing a slow lifestyle, can participate in lectures, mingle with like-minded people >>



and dine at restaurants that follow the slow food movement.

While there isn't a chapter in the UAE, a few restaurants and chefs have been practicing and promoting the movement, and hope to raise awareness amongst people.

The movement directly counters fast food, with its main principles being that the food we eat should not just taste fresh and delicious, but should also be produced in a clean way, with no negative impact on the environment, animals and health.

THE CONCEPT

"Slow Food is an idea, a way of living and a way of eating. It's a global grassroots association with thousands of members around the world, that link the pleasure of food with the commitment to the community and environment," says Ekkehard Lughofer, founder of the Slow Food Youth Network in Vienna.

Michael Pollan, an acclaimed author and expert on slow food states that eating a good, healthy diet is really easy. Pollan believes in eating real foods – mostly plants – and avoiding edible food-like substances. When Pollan says 'real food' he is referring to vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fish and meat.

The aim of the Slow Food movement is simple – to preserve and promote fruit and vegetables from local farmers and producers; encourage ethical buying in supermarkets; avoid genetically modified foods; and raise awareness about the importance of eating organic produce. With the slow food movement, you'll not only be aware of what you are eating, but also promote business within the region, for farmers and producers.

When you eat with a conscience, you connect with your food – you know where the produce you are eating comes from, and what exactly is going into your body. "The vision of Slow Food is that of a world in which all people can access and enjoy food that is good for them, good for those who grow it and good for the planet," says Alessandro D'Ubaldo, General manager and partner of 800Pizza, a popular

local pizza chain that practices the slow food movement.

Slow food advocates emphasise on the importance of biodiversity – defined as the variety of life found on Earth and all its natural processes and species, and the connections between each – which can be maintained through sustainable farming methods.

Ekkehard explains biodiversity with the concept that you mainly eat what you want to protect. "If people stop eating certain varieties, demand will obviously go down, and as a result, that particular variety will go out of production," he says. "This will lead to a loss of supply of certain local produce, as there is no longer a demand for it. For example, years ago, there were more than 100 varieties of apples available at a typical street market in Vienna. Today you will find less than 10 different ones on the market, which is rather sad."

Another notable practitioner who actively promotes biodiversity is Dr Vandana Shiva, author, vice-president of Slow Food International, and founder of Navdanya – a network of seed keepers and organic producers in 17 states in India. Vandana aims to protect the cultural and biological diversity of agriculture in India with her farms, while preserving forests, and local traditions of food and its link to Indian culture and heritage. The opening of Navadanya's slow food café in New Delhi last year is one of the ways in which she has been promoting the concept in the country; at the café, diners can find a menu of authentic Indian dishes made from local, seasonal produce, as well as shop for locally grown, organic produce from Vandana's Biodiversity conservation farm in Dehradun.

WHY GO SLOW?

Following and practicing the slow food movement has multiple benefits for health and the environment. If most of the food you eat is fresh, local produce, produced in a clean, ethical manner, and free from pesticides and chemicals, then you will reap the nutritional benefits. It is also important to remember to chew food slowly – this will help digestion and enable higher absorption of nutrients.

By following the principle of eating at the dining table with the family, you are encouraging your family to value the food they eat, and eat mindfully. Sitting down to a family meal every day is also a great way of spending quality time with each other, whereas eating dinner in front of the television or the computer will inevitably lead to mindless munching and eating until you are over-full.

Aside from the nutritional and emotional benefits of practising slow food, the ecological impact cannot be over-emphasised. Slow food relies on sustainable production and pays the people who made the food, in a fair manner, so the profit from the purchase goes direct to the source. Slow foods are grown in an ethical, sustainable practice, in ways that respect the earth as well. "Choosing to buy local, keeping away from industrial food, cooking for yourself, is by and large considered much better for your health. Spending your money with your local food makers is what we all need to consider," says Yael.

With the hectic pace of life in the UAE, adapting a slow lifestyle will take some patience and practice. However, once you make a conscious decision, a few simple lifestyle changes is all it takes, and you'll find you have time to stop and smell the roses – or in this case, the rosemary! 🌿

SIMPLE STEPS TO CHOOSING SLOW OVER FAST

Shop smart: It doesn't matter if you shop at a supermarket or order box schemes delivered directly to your household, buying fresh, local and organic produce will ensure taste and nutrition.

Grow your own: Try creating your own fruit, vegetable and herb garden. Take a look at the *Grow your own green patch* feature to get started.

Cook from scratch: By doing so, you will limit your use of convenience and processed foods.

Sit down for family dinners: Ensure your family sits down for a meal together, and take time to eat and unwind at the end of the day.

Take lunch breaks: Forget a rushed sandwich at your desk, make it a point to take a break from lunch and focus on your food when eating it.

Chew slowly: This is something you can practise whenever you're eating – it will not only aid the digestive process, but also prevent you from eating more than you should.

Support local trade: Whenever possible, choose local producers, farmers and suppliers.

Avoid fast, processed and convenience foods: You really don't need us to explain why!

BREADCRUMBS HERBED SAUCE

For Vegetables like Broccoli and Cauliflower

INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons LURPAK butter
1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
1 tablespoon breadcrumbs
1 tablespoon finely chopped parsley
salt
pepper

METHOD:

- Melt LURPAK butter in a saucepan over medium heat
- Add garlic and stir for few seconds, add breadcrumbs and parsley
- Keep on stirring for 1 minute or until breadcrumbs is golden
- Season with salt and pepper, remove from heat

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LOVE FOOD WITH LURPAK





Grow your own green patch

If you think it's impossible to have a herb or vegetable garden in the desert, think again! Nicola Monteath gets expert advice on growing fresh, nutritious produce at home.

You don't have to have a green thumb to be able to grow fruit, vegetables and herbs. Sure, it would help, but just about anyone can do it, in in just about any space, from a fully-fledged garden to a little herb corner in your balcony. Not only will you have fresh herbs and ingredients handy, whenever you need them, but growing your own is better for health and the wallet too. "It is a lot more economical to grow your own fresh produce and a fun activity for the family too," explains Hayley Mansell, head gardener of the farm at Al Tamimi Stables.

While it will not only help you eat healthier,

gardening also helps you calm your mind and relax – another reason to push you to getting started! The idea of growing your own produce, plucking and harvesting, right at home, seems rather therapeutic in itself. "It is a creative outlet and a way of being able to literally reap the fruits of your labour," says Bruce Pedersen from Greenworks, a Dubai based landscaping company.

Plus, working out the ecological benefits of growing your own isn't rocket science. The more plants we have, the better for the environment. "The more green we have all around us, the more oxygen the planet has to support human

and animal life," says Hayley. And the closer the source of the produce you are cooking with, the lower your carbon footprint – and where closer than your own vegetable garden?

"It is relatively easy to grow and maintain homegrown vegetables and herbs in your garden or even your balcony," says Hayley. Herbs are able to survive in hot dry locations, and perform their best when grown in well-drained fertile soils. All they require is a cup of plant food once a month, making it a surprisingly low-maintenance and easy job.

WHAT TO GROW

The hot climate in this region may discourage you from gardening. However, the UAE is known to have climate suitable for growing fruit, herbs and vegetables for most months – other than the humid summer. Although a few vegetables can be grown during the summer months, it is probably best avoided, as it could lead to a poor harvest.

"The UAE climate is actually great for growing vegetable, just as long as you know what time of year is best for what," says Hayley. "During mid-summer the climate is not ideal for plant growth, especially with the high temperatures and

humidity along the coastal areas. Most vegetable plants tend to be seasonal in nature and are tender. Very few of them can be grown with much success throughout summer, and without the use of specialised structures.

“The best season for seeding is now, as produce can then be harvested within three to four months. If you do attempt to grow vegetables in the summer, make sure they are in a sheltered, preferably shaded area,” says Bruce.

While you won't be able to grow everything in this part of the world, due to climatic conditions, you can have an abundant variety of seasonal and perennial plants. Perennials not only have a longer life, but also diversify your garden, and the ones that can be grown here include tomatoes, basil, sage, thyme, chives, coriander, lavender, mint, oregano. Seasonal vegetables, on the other hand, need to be seeded and harvested after a few months. These vegetables include zucchini and eggplant during spring, and pumpkin, capsicums and chillies during winter.

HOW TO GROW

Sun, soil and water are the three most significant requirements for growing anything in your garden. Sunlight, in this region, we are fortunately blessed with an abundance of. Soil maintenance and watering requires particular care, but isn't hard. If you are simply planning to grow a few herbs in your balcony, backyard, or even in your kitchen windowsill, plant them in deep pots. “Light watering and sunlight are the basic necessities for growing herbs, and if you make sure not to overcrowd the seeds, they will grow well,” says Hayley.

Soil: To successfully achieve good quality harvest, begin with good soil preparation. Compost is ideal for planting, but can be quite expensive, and is not easily available in Dubai. “If you are planting outdoors – into the ground in normal garden soil (mainly sand) – you need to incorporate at least 35 per cent compost into the top 10-15 cm of the soil. Root crops such as radish and carrots require a fairly light, friable soil (with a light crumbly texture); if the soil is too sandy and dense, the roots do not form properly,” says Bruce.

If growing in your garden, then raised beds are ideal in maintaining the overall success of your vegetables, as they protect plants from insects like worms, ants and bugs. “It also allows the roots to spread further through the soil,” Hayley adds.

Alternatively, you can opt for pots, planters or window boxes as these not only save space, but also help control pests and overcome soil issues.

Deep pots are best used for vegetables with long roots such as carrots and radish. “When growing in a pot or container, ensure that there is adequate drainage, this prevents over-watering or water logged soils, and also helps facilitate the introduction of oxygen into the soil,” says Bruce.

Placement of the pots is also important. If you are planting in pots on a balcony, ensure they are kept well away from light coloured walls or windows, as reflected light and heat from these surfaces can burn the plants,” he adds.

If you prefer growing the seedling at first, instead of directly putting it into the garden, use a small pot, and then transfer into bigger, more suitable pots – so that the roots have more room to grow. When growing vegetables and herbs in a garden or a large balcony, put the big plants at the back, and smaller plants in front, so that they get equal amounts of sunlight.

● *The best season for seeding is now, as produce can then be harvested within a few months.* ●

Using fertiliser is important, to add the necessary plant nutrients, into the soil. “Some people prefer to use organic while others are comfortable using chemical fertilisers. Organic fertilisers are slow acting, but have a longer and more beneficial impact on the soil, while chemical fertilisers are faster and concentrated, but are quickly leached from the soil,” says Bruce.

Watering and maintenance: Vegetable soil should be loose and well drained – to avoid clogging up of roots – as standing water or saturated soil deprives roots of oxygen. Different vegetables have varying water requirements, so research how much water the crops you're planting require, and water accordingly. The soil should be slightly damp, not wet, but also shouldn't dry out too soon. If the plants are over-watered they will rot, and if they are not watered sufficiently, they will only produce flowers,

While it may seem like most of the hard work is done as soon as the seeds are planted and watered, there are a few other aspects to consider if you want a healthy harvest. “A number of potential pests will also enjoy your vegetable garden; some vegetables are more prone to attack, while others are more resilient,” says Bruce. Plants that are prone to attack include lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, and fast growing leafy

vegetables, whereas herbs such as rosemary, thyme, onions, radish, carrots, beetroot, eggplant and beans are less vulnerable.

To make sure these pests don't feast on your plants, avoid overcrowding plants. Bruce also suggests not over-fertilising, as it gives rise to soft green growth, which is quickly attacked by insects. Using pesticides to ward off insects from your plants, to keep them in top-notch condition, is quite often a solution used by most people. If you do choose to use pesticides, Bruce advises only using it when you have to, and in areas that are affected. “Make sure it is suitable for use on vegetables and herbs; check the residual period of the pesticide and do not harvest or eat anything that is sprayed within this period,” he says.

Other methods of reducing pests include sticky traps – a non-toxic glue trap for insects – and planting other plants around to deter insects. “Watermelons are ideal for attracting insects; they tend to go towards the fruit more often than the vegetable patch. Laying shingles or small stones around the base of the vegetables will also make it harder for animals such as slugs to infect plants,” says Hayley.

Lastly, one of the most important things that people disregard is removing or cutting off dead and infected leaves that have insect holes in them. Take tender, loving care of your plants, and make sure you look out for any signs of infection, when you water them.

By growing your own vegetable and herb garden, you will not only have a sense of achievement, but will also be benefiting your own health and the planet in the process. To get started, figure out what produce you cook with regularly, and which ones from those you can plant here. Once you manage to achieve a successful harvest, you will never go back to buying them from the supermarket again, over your home-grown produce! 🌱

GARDENING TIMELINE

**Not sure what to plant when?
Here is a guideline to go by;**

- Cooler months (November to April) – Cucumbers, peppers, chilli.
- Spring (March to May) – Potatoes, eggplants, onions, okra, pumpkins, courgettes, string beans, salad leaves and sweet corn.
- Year-round – Tomatoes and herbs including basil and mint.





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“Gary, Matt and I are more influential than the prime minister!”

Masterchef Australia judge George Calombaris tells Sudeshna Ghosh that even though the show has catapulted his career to unimaginable heights, he still sees himself as just a boy who cooks.

You probably know his face from the globally popular MasterChef Australia series, arguably the most watched version of the international show. He is the bad cop to host Gary Mehigan's good cop, the co-host and judge who will throw sharp criticisms to the hopeful participants as easily as he will give them an encouraging hug when they are almost giving in to the pressure. He is one-third of a triumvirate of culinary celebrities which has managed to showcase the thriving food scene in Australia to the world like nothing else, all the while nurturing the new talent that they hope will take up their mantles.

While it has enjoyed international success, nowhere else is the show's popularity more significant than of course, its home ground. And in Australia, it is huge. Big enough to merit moving the only televised Australian election debate between current Prime Minister Julia Gillard and opposition leader Tony Abbot from its original airing time, to an hour earlier, in order to avoid a clash with the MasterChef season finale in 2010. “We are more influential than the Prime Minister!”

says George, sounding more surprised with his own scope of influence than anyone else. “I’m still trying to work out the reason for the show’s success. I mean, you’ve got three not-so-attractive pudgy guys on the screen the whole time!”

Self-deprecating as he might be, prod him a bit on the real reasons for the show's success, and he credits it to having soul and integrity. “It’s about delivering something to the wider audience that everyone can connect to. We’ve got no scripts [Gary Mehigan, who is the main anchor of the show, does use a script however], it’s very authentic. It’s all the little things done well, and integrity and honesty is paramount – after all, we’ve got our reputations on the line.”

A walk in the clouds

Even before he became a household name, the young chef – he is only 34 years old – had a formidable reputation already, with several awards, and recognition in the form of chefs’ hats in The Age Good Food Guide under his belt. Having started his career as an apprentice at the Sofitel in Melbourne, George’s star rose

quickly, winning accolades for his co-judge and former boss Gary Mehigan’s Fenix restaurant during his time there, and thereafter moving on to success with his restaurant Reserve, which he masterminded the opening of in 2003. Meanwhile, he acquired national and international recognition with several awards and success at the Bocuse d’Or culinary grand prix in Lyon, France.

He went on to open his flagship restaurant, The Press Club, in 2006 when he was just 27. TV appearances – including on the ever-popular Ready Steady Cook – and cookbooks followed soon after, as did international expansion, with the opening of his modern Greek restaurant The Belvedere Club in Mykonos in 2007. In 2009, he was selected as one of the judges on MasterChef, and the rest is history.

So much success at a young age could easily go to anyone’s head, but George remains remarkably down to earth. “The show has dramatically changed my life. I’ve gone from being the boy that cooked in the kitchen, to someone who is known. The bar has been >>

raised, as a result, for my restaurants too.

But my father helps keep me grounded," he says, succinctly explaining his philosophy thus: "You've got to keep your mind in the clouds, but feet on the ground."

Masterchef Australia seems to echo this philosophy with its mix of the homely with the fine dining. "You can learn how to make a scone or a pavlova, as well as something aspirational," says George.

Food with soul

George's personal cooking style is far from homely, however, with his experimental haute cuisine style having become a talking point for gourmards. "I use a modern approach and techniques, but with nostalgic dishes. I like to take classic flavours and turn them on their head. It's about challenging people – I want people to be thrilled when they come into my restaurant," he says. Take his 'Oops, I dropped my ice cream' dish on the menu of one of his Melbourne restaurants for example, which is his take on fish and chips – a tartar-flavoured ice cream cone is smashed on a plate with deep fried fish scattered around it.

George describes his cuisine as modern Hellenic, in which he draws upon his Greek ancestry and combines it with molecular gastronomy techniques and a focus on quality produce, to create dishes that are as unexpected as they are classically-rooted. His Greek roots are very important to his cooking, with his mother and grandmother being credited for developing his passion for food. "They were amazing cooks. They would grow things in the backyard, and source the best produce," reminisces George. "I try and draw on my heritage as much as possible, that's what makes me Australian – the multi-cultural backgrounds that have created a food bowl in this country."

While his mother has been an important influence in his cooking, George gets inspired by anything, from places, to certain times in his life. "I like to take moments that have made an impact on me and translate that into a dish." A perfect example of this would be a cured fish dish he serves with lavender scented pebbles freighted in from Mykonos – to recreate the memory of sitting on an island beachfront eating freshly caught seafood in a balmy sea breeze. Or, to evoke the sensation of being in an Italian orange orchard eating roasted chestnuts, he serves a dish in which a barbecue comes to the table, with chestnuts, and dry ice creating an orange scented cloud.

Out there as his food may be, George makes it a point to remain firmly grounded. "I still do the pass three, four times a week in my restaurant," he says. The other thing that hasn't changed is his focus on fresh, seasonal and ethical. "My latest project, the Press Club Garden, is about celebrating the ingredient. We will be growing specialty vegetables there, as I want to get as close to the land and sea as possible."

Among other things in the pipeline, George plans to open a new restaurant in Melbourne called Jimmy Grants – "which will be a souvlaki bar and bottle shop" – release a sixth book, a bible of modern, classic Greek food, and focus on development. All this alongside filming MasterChef Australia, of course. With so much going on – he currently has seven restaurants: The Press Club, The Little Press and Cellar, Hellenic Republic, Maha Bar & Grill, Mama Baba and St Katherine's in Melbourne, and The Belvedere Club in Mykonos – will he have time to think about expanding his brand further internationally? In the UAE, home to many an international celebrity name restaurant, in particular? "If it feels right in my heart and soul, I will do it. If I do something here, it will be cheap and grungy," he answers.

SIGNATURE RECIPE

Skordalia soup, poached apple egg

Serves 4

1 garlic head, pureed
3 golden shallots
50g unsalted butter
1 litre chicken stock
125ml cream
4 Granny smith apples
Chervil, red kahel and mache, to garnish (or other salad greens of your choice)
FOR POACHED APPLE EGG
500ml apple juice
2½g calcium chloride, 2g sodium alginate (available online or in specialty stores)
500ml water

1 Wrap garlic head in foil and bake in a moderate oven at 180C, until soft (between 45 minutes to an hour). Let cool at room temperature and then squeeze roasted garlic from its skin.
2 Slice shallots and in a medium sized pan, gently sweat in butter until translucent. Add

garlic puree to shallots and cook gently until well mixed. Pour in the chicken stock and reduce by half to approx two cups. Add the cream and bring to a gentle simmer. Remove from the heat and blend in a food processor until smooth. Strain mixture through a fine chinios and season to taste.

3 To make the poached apple egg, dissolve the calcium chloride in a bowl of water and set aside in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

4 In a jug, combine apple juice and sodium alginate using a hand held blender.

5 Measure 1¼ tablespoons of the apple juice solution into a half-round measuring spoon and sub-merge into the calcium chloride solution slowly. Once the juice has been tipped from the spoon, take the spoon out and repeat. Allow the chemical reaction to occur for about 5 mins, or until a skin forms around the apple juice. Once the skin has formed around the juice, remove gently using a tablespoon and place in plain water in the refrigerator until needed (this tops the cooking process).

6 Using a mandolin, slice 1 apple to 2mm thick, avoiding the core (there is no need to peel the apple). Then finely slice to resemble matchsticks.

7 To finish skordalia soup, bring to the boil and aerate it using a hand blender to make it light and fluffy.

8 To serve, scatter apple matchsticks in the bowl, then, very carefully, add 1 poached apple egg on top and finally pour the soup carefully around the poached apple egg. 📺



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Food Safari: Japan

Each month, we dip into the UAE's multicultural melting pot to discover a new cuisine from a foodie.

When someone's whole life and career revolves around food, you know that it has to be fueled by passion. Mary-kei Macfarlane, a lifestyle and food stylist, and blogger, of Japanese and British origin, works with Bareface modelling and talent agency, with a portfolio of clients that range from restaurants to food and kitchen gadget brands. Mary-kei set foot in Dubai over eight years ago, and has been globetrotting ever since she was a kid, "I grew up between Japan, Saudi Arabia and England, and was always open to settling down in another country, as I got quite used to making new friends and moving schools, over the years," she says.

When we arrive at her home in Jumeirah, Mary-kei brings out her colourful Japanese props and tableware, and creates a duck out of paper she has pulled out from her origami set. Her walls are adorned with colorful frames, inspiration boards and puzzles that have been framed, while bookshelves are stacked with cookbooks and Japanese curios – a

reflection of her personality and work. It's no surprise that one of Mary-kei's favourite stores for tableware and all-things Japanese is Daiso. "They sell everything there, from unique tableware and curios to Japanese ingredients. It's great!" she says. Mary-Kei, being Japanese, reinforces the belief that Japan specialises in quirkiness, from its street-style to its food. "I think because I used to travel a lot, I was exposed to many different cultures. I remember going back to Japan after studying fashion design in England, and thought how bizarre and different everything is there," she says.

THE COUNTRY

Japan, an island nation in East Asia, is located in the Pacific Ocean, and is east of the Sea of Japan, China, Korea and Russia, with the Sea of Okhotsk to the north, and Taiwan to the south. Made up of an archipelago of over 6,000 islands, it has a population of over 125 million, with capital city Tokyo covering

the largest metropolitan area in the world. Mary-Kei grew up in Tokyo, in an area called Yoga. "I used to live on top of the hill, and my best friend and I would walk down the hill to school, every day," she says. One of her fondest memories was her mother picking her up after school, and taking her to a nearby grocery store to buy a sweet. "When I think about those days now, I remember how lovely it was growing up there. It was so safe and still is. My best friend and I would sometimes walk to her neighbourhood known as the cherry blossom new town – as it boasts the most stunning display of cherry blossoms – and we would just walk around and kick snow that had turned pink because of the cherry blossoms," she reminisces.

Growing up in Japan wasn't very different from any other big city. Mary-kei spent her free time busy with activities such as swimming lessons, and cycling in the park. "I loved going for picnics over the weekends, and used to play badminton with my father, over our garden gate," she says.

Japan's geographical area composes mostly of rugged terrains and mountainous areas, providing tropical climate in the south to cool temperatures in the north. Weather and seasonality naturally play a big role in what the Japanese eat, and since Japan is surrounded by seas, seafood is an integral part of the diet, as is rice, which is a staple – eaten in sushi rolls, with curries, or even on its own – and is harvested from the regions of Maruyama, Kumano and the Noto Peninsula.

THE CUISINE

The climate in Japan varies from tropical in the south to cooler temperatures in the north, and the whole nation is surrounded by sea, which is one of the reasons why seafood is predominant in Japanese cuisine. Japanese cooking usually contains flavourings, as opposed to spices and herbs, with some of the most prominent being soy sauce, hondashi – dry fish stock powder – and mirin. "If we aren't flavouring our dishes with these, we use some sort of fish sauce to get the flavour," says Mary-kei. White sugar is often used to balance the saltiness of dishes, while cabbage, pumpkin, onions, carrots, peppers, mooli radish – eaten pickled or grated with katsu – are some of the more commonly used vegetables in Japan.

One of the most common misconceptions about Japanese food that Mary-kei constantly encounters is that it is extremely healthy. "The meals are balanced, as you have a few vegetables, some rice and maybe a fried chicken, fish, beef or pork cutlet, but it isn't as

healthy as people make it out to be!" she says. Which brings us to the subject of Japanese women inevitably being very slim. "I have no idea how they stay skinny, but I think it's because of the portion sizes," she says. "Portions aren't huge, as we prefer concentrating more on quality than quantity."

This is also one of the reasons bento boxes, in which small portions of different dishes are packed into a single box, are quite popular in Japan. "I used to take bento boxes to school. My mom would make mini burgers, fried wiener sausages, or sushi rolls with fruit on the side," she says.

Another common misconception people have about Japanese cuisine is that the main dishes from the country are sushi and sashimi. "We only eat sushi at big family gatherings, but not every day," says Mary-kei. While sushi is made at home on special occasions, most of the time, meals consist of a variety of other dishes such as stews, rice balls, and in modern cities, western-influenced dishes such as pastas – all made with seasonal ingredients.

Japan experiences all four seasons, and every month of the year, the Japanese have one main ingredient that is used widely, from restaurants to homes. "In May, we would cook with scallops; in June, it was spider crab," says Mary-kei. She believes that this is great as you get to eat and cook with a variety of fresh produce.

A typical lunch would be ramen, katsu, koroke – panko-covered fried potatoes, and curries eaten with rice or noodles. "Rice is an integral part of Japanese cuisine, because of the variety of ways in which it can be eaten, from savoury to sweet," she says.

Noodles are also quite popular in Japan, with noodles on ice – dipped in ice after cooking and then eaten with flavouring – being a popular dish eaten in summer. Snacks eaten in Japan can vary from shrimp flavoured crisps, grilled seaweed to Poki (long biscuit sticks with chocolate dip) which are Mary-kei's favourite. "Dinner is our main meal of the day, as the family sits and eats together," she says. The Japanese usually eat a meat, chicken or seafood and vegetable based stew for dinner, which is cooked on a hob in the middle of the table and eaten with rice," she says.

Mary-kei, seen here cooking with her best friend in school, has loved food since she was a child



Mary-kei spent an idyllic childhood in Tokyo with her siblings

Mary-kei enjoys whipping up traditional Japanese cuisine in her Dubai home



The Japanese have quite the sweet tooth. "Dumplings with red bean paste is quite a popular dessert, and we usually eat it with a side of fruit," says Mary-kei. "We don't generally make desserts, at home. In Tokyo, people always send over fruits platters and desserts, by post, just as a way of sending goodwishes and spreading their kindness and generosity. So, there is inevitably something sweet to treat yourself to, after dinner, in most homes!" she says.

THE CULTURE

Culture and traditions revolving around food is a big part of Japanese culture, and not only during celebration and festivals. Every weekend Mary-kei would visit her grandmother – who lived on the outskirts of Tokyo – and tuck into all sorts of dishes and sweets she had made. "She would make me a traditional dessert that was rice covered in red bean, which she used to love more than me!" she says. Mary-kei loved her trips to her grandmother's house not just for the indulgences, but because it gave her an opportunity to observe rural life. "I would watch the farmers wrap all the pears on the trees, with a piece of paper, so that they would not get destroyed before ripening," she says.

In Japanese cooking, we learn, there is no one

way of preparing a particular dish, as every family has their on take on how something is made. One example is of the rice balls. "My mother makes the rice balls really big in size, as did my grandmother, and I do the same now as well. I noticed that when I was young, when I used to visit family and friends, I would see the same dish made in a triangle, rectangle and circle shape," she says. While all the ingredients and flavourings are the same, the way it is made and presented tends to differ.

This reflects the importance which is laid on presentation and rituals in Japan. People are very particular about the way they serve and prepare the dinner table, with everything from the tableware to the plating, being elegant and dainty, says Mary-kei. For example, fruits are always served peeled, sliced and with a fork on the side.

Another example is the famously elaborate traditional tea ceremony, also known as 'The way of Tea', which is practiced during social gatherings, but increasingly rarely. "There are only a minority of people who know how to do the whole ritual correctly. I have been to a few tea ceremonies where the whole ritual was explained to me," she says.

To show us how much more there is to Japanese cuisines than sushi and tempura, Mary-kei shares two of her favourite family recipes. >>

Tonkatsu (Breaded pork loin)

SERVES 4 

4 pork loin fillets (can be replaced with chicken as well)

1 egg

1 cup of flour

2 cups of panko (Japanese bread crumbs)

Cooking oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Tonkatsu sauce (available at Choithram's) (how much) Shredded cabbage, to serve

A small portion of takuan (Japanese mooli radish pickle, available at Spinney's)

1 Tenderise the pork fillets and set aside.

2 Prepare three shallow bowls by placing the flour – seasoned with salt and pepper – in the first bowl. In the second bowl, add beaten eggs, and in the third place the panko bread crumbs. Place the pork in the flour and shake off any excess. Coat it in the egg, and lastly in the bowl of panko, making sure that it is fully coated.

3 Heat oil in a pan and fry. Set aside on a paper towel to drain oil, and serve with tonkatsu sauce drizzled on top of the pork meat, the shredded cabbage and a side of takuan.



TIP You could also serve this with Japanese rice.



Shiratama dumplings with Azuki beans and vanilla ice cream

SERVES 4

120g shiratamano (sweet rice flour, available at Daiso and select supermarkets)

4 tbsp water

Water, for boiling


Cold water, for the dumplings

4 scoops vanilla ice cream, to serve

2 tsp of sweet azuki bean paste (available at select supermarkets)

1 Put the shiratamano in a bowl. Add a little water and mix well. Keep adding the water and mixing until the mixture reaches a clay-like texture.

2 Boil water in a saucepan. Roll up the shiratamano and cut into equal portions. Take each portion and roll into a ball in your hands and then gently flatten it with your palms. Drop each dumpling gently into the boiling water – be careful that they don't stick together. Scoop out with a slotted spoon when they float up to the surface, and drop into a bowl of cold water.

3 To serve, place the dumplings on top of a scoop of vanilla ice cream, and top with the sweet azuki bean paste. 



Saturday Fun Brunch

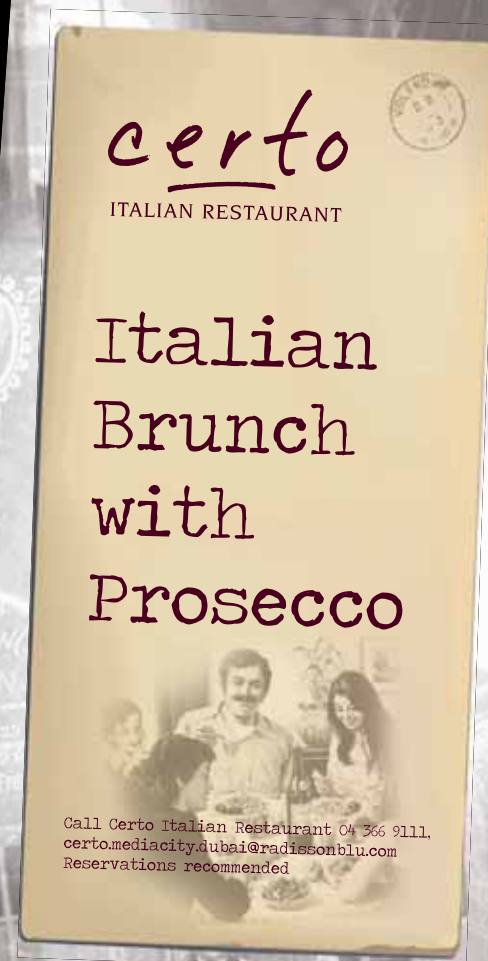
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Reservations are recommended



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PAX
ITALIAN CUISINE

PIZZA ACROBATICS

Join Chef Pasqualino as he shares his passion for traditional Italian pizza while demonstrating his award winning art, Pizza Acrobatics

Traditional Pizza Making Masterclass

Get back to basics with traditional Italian pizza under the watchful eye of Chef Pasqualino.
Thursday March 7, 3-5pm
150 AED per person

Traditional Pizza Set Dinner

Enjoy a passionate three course meal with pizza acrobatics taking place above you.
March 6 & 7, from 7pm
225 AED per person

Brunch with Pizza Acrobatics

Enjoy our famed Friday Brunch with added acrobatic performances from Chef Pasqualino.
March 8, 12-noon – 4pm
195 AED (soft drinks and chilled juices); 235 AED (house beverages)
285 AED (sparkling and selected house spirits); 495 AED (bubbly)

For enquiries and reservations please call:
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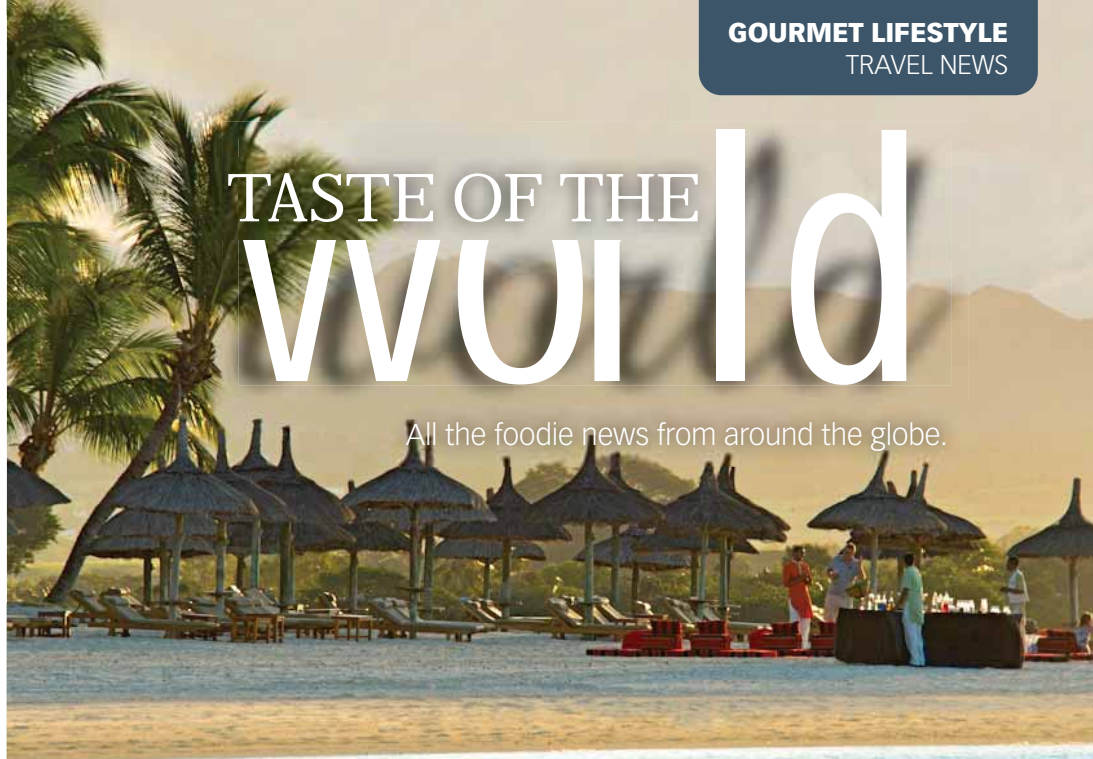
Dusit Thani
DUBAI



And he's back!

Gordon Ramsay fans, rejoice! His multiple Michelin star-winning Restaurant Gordon Ramsay in Chelsea reopens this month after a refurbishment, with a new standing Chef Patron, Clare Smyth, who is also a partner in the restaurant. The refurb will see Art Deco-inspired décor, while highlights of the menu will include classics like the lobster, salmon and langoustine ravioli – we can't wait to try it for ourselves! Visit gordonramsay.com for more.

Adding a unique twist to the exciting culinary world of Barcelona is the designer Grand Hotel Central, where owner Pau Guardans not only gives guests the inside track on the vibrant El Born neighbourhood the hotel is located in – if you ask nicely – but also takes them on a fishing trip in a luxury boat accompanied by expert fishermen, to bring back the catch of the day. You can sample the fruits of your labour at a gourmet dinner cooked up by Michelin-starred chef Ramon Frexia at the hotel's Ávalon Restaurant. From €1698 (around Dhs8,200) for the Original Experience package for two, visit designhotels.com/specials for more info.



TASTE OF THE world

All the foodie news from around the globe.

Easter on an Island

Get away with the family on a short Easter break to Mauritius where a spread of culinary activities has been laid out through the period. You can look forward to a sumptuous Seafood & Fish market dinner buffet on March 29 which will include local delicacies. Spend the next evening in a more elegant manner at Prime, with a wine dinner experience. Easter Sunday on March 31st can be celebrated with a festive jazz brunch, with an Easter egg display, as well as an egg hunt for the kids. And if you feel the need to work off all the indulgences, you can go on a dolphin-spotting kayak tour in nearby mangroves accompanied by marine experts. All this while staying in an uber-luxurious natural setting, with postcard-perfect views to match! Room rates start from €630 per room (around Dhs3,050), visit www.oneandonlyresorts.com.



JAPAN GOES TO GERMANY

If you're planning to be in Europe this month, block the dates between March 15-23 to book in for dinner at the Mandarin Oriental Munich's award-winning Restaurant Mark's. The team from Nobu Matsuhisa's Matsuhisa Mykonos restaurant will be there, serving up a special six-course tasting menu – including signature dishes such as the Black cod with miso – in a specially decorated contemporary set-up. The menu is priced at €129 (Dhs625), visit www.mandarinoriental.com for details.

Chow down in Chile

From haute cuisine to rustic food cooked alfresco on an open flame; from snow-capped peaks of the Andes to Pacific coastlines; from indigenous fruit grown in arid deserts, to Mediterranean-esque produce – if there was ever a land of contrasts, it is Chile, says Sudeshna Ghosh.



Photographs FELIPE MERCADO

There's no doubt about it – Latin American cuisine is hot at the moment, around the world. Having popped up on various food trend lists for 2013, South American food is definitely having its moment. But there is so much more to it than Brazilian Churrascaria and Argentinian Asado.

Chile may not yet be on the world's radar as a gastronomic destination, but it is just a matter of time before this unique, long country with varied geography – it stretches along 4,300km bordering Peru on the north, Bolivia and Argentina to the east, sheltered by the majestic Andes mountain range, and the Strait of Magellan in the south – starts attracting tourists to try their unique cuisines and fantastic produce. So far, Chile's stunning coastlines, lofty mountains and volcanoes, lush valleys and forests, awe-inspiring glaciers and deserts, and a rich cultural and literary legacy have been reason enough for tourists to visit in droves (it made it to the New York Times must-visit destination list for 2011) – it's not many countries that can lay claim to having all this in one single destination.

This blessed geography, which also means the land is well-protected by the Pacific ocean and the Andes mountains from foreign pests, has led to an agricultural abundance – Chile grows everything from Mediterranean fruit and vegetables to indigenous produce you can't find anywhere else – and an abundance of seafood, including species unique to the region, which is at the heart of its gastronomy. With a focus on fresh, natural produce, eaten in as natural a state as possible, and clean, simple flavours, Chilean cuisine has evolved with influences from Europe and even the Middle East, with one basic philosophy – the ingredient is the hero.

And what ingredients they are! Quinoa, which is increasingly being seen as a superfood elsewhere in the world, is something Chileans have been eating for centuries. Chilean salmon and seabass has made its way into the menus of top restaurants around the world, but nowhere else is it as prized as it is here. Exotic seafood like barnacles, whip hake, pink cusk-eel, clams and abalone are commonly used in the local diet. From avocados, berries, and olives to native produce only available here such as Murta (Chilean guavaberry), rosehip, and Papaya (not the tropical paw paw we are familiar with, but a smaller, yellow conical fruit cultivated in colder climates), the land and the sea in Chile is so generous, that good food is never hard to come by.

While traversing the entire country to discover its cuisine can take months – I know, a friend did it! – here is my pick of essential experiences you need, to get a true taste of Chile.



Mulato restaurant

URBAN GOURMET

Anyone's first port of call in Chile has to be capital city Santiago. With a vibe that is more European than Latino, Santiago, Chile's main commercial centre, is a young, energetic city with tree-lined paths and historic buildings rubbing shoulders with modern high-rises, along both banks of the Mapucho river that runs through it. The Plaza de Armas is the city centre with tourist attractions like the Romanesque Santiago main cathedral, while the nearby Constitution Square is home to historic buildings from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. A can't-miss attraction in Santiago is Bella Vista, a quaint arty quarter where you will find gorgeous boutiques, cafés and restaurants, and art galleries dotted around a warren of leafy lanes – it's perfect for picking up souvenirs such as lapis lazuli jewellery by day, and getting a taste of the local nightlife after dark.

After a hard day checking out the city sights, head to Restaurant Mulato in Lastarria, headed by Chilean celebrity chef Cristian Correa. In an effort to revive Chile's lost culinary legacy, Cristian serves contemporary food that celebrates the ingredient – whether it's fresh sea urchins or local berries, with the menu using produce sourced from local markets. Set in a converted heritage building, the restaurant offers a relaxed yet elegant atmosphere, not unlike a country home, that provides the perfect atmosphere for sampling the homemade breads, micro-brewed beers, freshly roasted on-site coffees, and of course, creative cuisine.

Call 00562-6384931 for Restaurant Mulato. Visit cristiancorrea.cl for more on the chef.

WINE COUNTRY

Just an hour from Santiago is the Colchagua valley, a fertile region that is now not only the country's leading wine-producing area, but also a prestigious holiday home suburb for the wealthy. The Viu

Manent winery in Colchagua is a family-run establishment dating back to 1935. Spread over 250 hectares, Viu Manent specialises in fine wines – the oldest vine is 120 years old – produced with sustainable and eco-friendly values.

The picturesque winery is open for tours, where you can explore the vineyards and cellars in old-school horse-drawn carriages guided by friendly staff, but what makes it truly unique is the on-site cooking studio run by Chilean foodie personality, Cordon Bleu-trained chef and former fashion PR, Pilar Rodriguez. Combining her passion for food with her marketing experience, Pilar offers visitors a unique insight into the diversity of produce in Chile, combining local ingredients, most of them sourced from within a 50-metre radius, with French cooking techniques to delicious effect – think Steamed crayfish with organic herbs where the fish comes from nearby Limari river; Pan seared lamb loin from a local farm with cherries and plums; and Chilean hazelnut crumbs with pisco granita (pisco is the Chilean national drink, a grape brandy), all paired with the finest wines.

Visit viumanent.com for details of wine tours and tastings; Pilar's cooking studio is open for group bookings, visit pilarrodriguez.com.

LAKESIDE LUXURY

Further south in Chile, Pucon is a destination in the Mapuche region popular with tourists for its spectacular landscapes of snow-capped mountains, crystal-clear lakes, lush valleys carpeted with seasonal blooms, and dense forests. To explore nature at its scenic best, check into the Antumalal hotel, a unique boutique resort on the banks of the Villarica lake, that has hosted many a celebrity visitor including the Queen of England. Designed to blend into its environment, the stylish 22-room resort marries Bauhaus architecture with Alpine log cabin-style comforts. The floor-to-ceiling windows offer incomparable views while cosy fireplaces, and touches like rugs scattered over the natural wood floors and colourful cushions, create a homely feel. With warm service to match, this is where that rare balance between sophistication and friendliness is effortlessly achieved. You can choose to do as much or as little as you want here, from activities including whitewater rafting, horseback riding, trekking and hiking, kayaking and fishing, to curling up with a book by the fireplace with a view.

But the one thing you should definitely not miss is the delectable food at the Parque restaurant. Whether it's traditional specialties such as empanadas and Chilean ceviche, or food with a European twist such as smoked salmon salad, Patagonian lamb rack with creamed barley and >>

mint, or Apple strudel with homemade ice cream, the one thing you're guaranteed is creativity in the kitchen that is worthy of any leading restaurant in the world (yoghurt ginger or poppy seed ice cream, anyone?), exceptional flavours, and again, a celebration of local and seasonal ingredients.

Room rates start from US\$323 (around Dh\$1185), visit antumalal.com.

BACK TO BASICS

The Mapuche are an indigenous tribe of central Chile who have managed to preserve their centuries-old heritage, which include a community-driven approach to living, and a diet based on fresh produce foraged from the land. Anita Epulef is a traditional Mapuche lady who is something of an ambassador of their culture, committed as she is to changing the way the heritage cuisine is viewed. A plain-speaking, simple woman, dressed in traditional gear, Anita welcomes guests into her 'Cucina Mapu Iyagi' (Mapuche kitchen), which is just that – a rustic hut with communal dining tables and a homely kitchen behind, adorned with dried herbs and garlic bulbs, and handmade pottery.

Anita conducts workshops on Mapuche cuisine, starting with an introduction to their history and way of life (she can only speak their local dialect, so a translator is required). As she passionately speaks about how their culture is based on respecting the land, it is interesting to learn how the concepts the Mapuche have been practicing for ages – such as seasonal harvests, root-to-tip eating, responsible and sustainable farming – are all becoming fashionable in the rest of the world now, as are some of their native foods, like quinoa and maki fruit.

She then takes you into her kitchen to cook with her, the menu depending on what was foraged for that morning. On the day of my visit, we cooked and ate traditional dishes like roasted potato bread (Poni cancan), which she grilled on an open flame in her backyard; fried bread (Sopai pilla); sautéed mushrooms with root herbs (Quilla); local vegetables tossed with leek and onions (Ngullo); grated potato with toasted flour and herbs (Zanku); and fresh salads (Pebve). The food is simple and rustic, low on condiments but reliant on local herbs for flavour, and oozes with the taste of freshness and wholesome goodness. Spending a day with warm, welcoming Anita, cooking with her and her family, and eating that freshly prepared, hearty food in the sunshine of the Currahue valley, is a great reminder of how the simple pleasures in life can, sometimes, really be the best.

Lunch workshops at Anita's kitchen cost US\$25 (Dh\$91) per head, minimum bookings of six people are required. Email anita.epulef@gmail.com.

Pilar Rodriguez is the face of modern Chilean gastronomy



The Antumalal resort is a beautiful haven set by a lake, with stunning food to match the views



Anita Epulef is a champion of Mapuche cuisine



Traditional Mapuche food relies on fresh produce foraged from the area



The Mapuche are an indigenous tribe with a distinct culinary heritage





At Viu Manent winery, you can enjoy wine tours in horse-drawn carriages



Elqui Domos offers a truly unique experience



Dried garlic and chilli decorate Anita's rustic kitchen

Pisco is the national drink of Chile



DINING WITH THE STARS

The Elqui valley, in northern Chile, is home to some of the planet's clearest skies, making it a hub for astronomers worldwide. The valley has unique temperature qualities – hot at day and cold at night – which, combined with the natural protection of the mountains around it give it the unusually clear skies.

With the Elqui river running through it, and the rugged Andes towering over, Elqui also offers an ideal agricultural environment, particularly for grapes used in wines, and Pisco sours, Chile's national drink. The region is also known for its lamb and variety of cheeses.

From La Serena, the closest airport, drive past the rugged terrain of the rocky mountains, dotted with sudden oases of green, to come upon Pisco Elqui, a little hamlet perched on a hillside, and the official home of Pisco.

A short distance away is the Elqui Domos hotel, an unusual property with geodesic or dome-shaped igloo-style rooms designed to offer the ultimate

stargazing opportunities. The dome rooms offer basic but comfortable accommodation with the beds on a raised platform accessed by stairs, strategically placed under detachable roofs so you could literally sleep under the stars.

But, before you hit the sack, make time to explore the area – which is also home to Chile's Nobel prize-winning poet Gabriela Mistral – discovering the mystic energies it is known to have, which makes it popular with alternative healers. Have a meal at the family-run Molle restaurant nearby, which offers home-style Molle cuisine (the Molles are known to be the original inhabitants of this land dating back to 600BC), but keep dinner booked back at Elqui Domos for an unforgettable evening under a glittering starlit sky, poolside. Even though you will be eating at a table with knives and forks, you can expect to make like the locals and eat traditional specialties like squash soup, boiled papaya fruit in syrup, and an absolute highlight, a whole spit-roasted baby goat that is as succulent as it is flavourful.

Prices for accommodation at Elqui Domos start from US\$150 (Dhs550), astronomy tours at the amateur observatory located onsite are also available, US\$50 (Dhs180) per head. Visit elquidomos.cl.

SHOPPING TIPS

Foodie products to bring back from Chile

Merken: A delicious spice blend of dried and smoked red chillies, toasted coriander seeds, cumin and salt, that is widely used in Chilean cuisine. The versatile spice can be used as a bbq rub, sprinkled over salads or as a dip with olive oil.

Pisco: The Chilean national drink, a sweetish grape brandy, is widely available and best enjoyed as an aperitif.

Olive oils: Chile has recently started producing extra virgin olive oils of a very high quality.

Jams and preserves: Shop around for jams made of papaya, rosehip and other native fruits to bring a taste of Chile back home.

TRAVEL DIARY

HOW TO GET THERE

There are no direct flights to Santiago from the UAE. Emirates offers the best flight options via Brazil (daily flights to Rio de Janeiro or Sao Paulo), with a connecting flight with local airline LANChile. Flights to Rio de Janeiro cost from Dhs7,400, tickets to Santiago can cost approximately Dhs12,000. Visit emirates.com for details.

What's new at Taste of Dubai?

Your favourite food festival is back. And there's lots of new things to look forward to in this year's edition.

It's that time of the year again when the city's foodies flock together for three days of culinary bliss at the Dubai Media City amphitheatre. From cooking demos with top chefs, and the opportunity to sample delicacies from leading restaurants, to kids' activities and live entertainment, it all comes together from March 14-16, in an alfresco-perfect environment. Aside from the usual favourites, whether it's chefs like Gary Rhodes in attendance and restaurants like Rivington Grill participating, there are lots of new features in this year's events, to tempt you back through those gates. Here's what to watch out for:



NEW CELEBRITY CHEFS

- Celebrity chef from UK, host of British TV show *Cook Yourself Thin* and author of *'Gizzi's Kitchen Magic'* (Virgin books), Gizzi Erskine will be at the Philips Chef's Theatre and the Kenwood cookery school, in this, her first visit to the UAE. She tells us what we can expect from her at the event:

It will be an insight into how to eat skinny in the week and slightly more wickedly on the weekend. I will be showing some quick fixes for the week and a super speedy but healthy feast for the weekends. I have never been to Dubai so am looking forward to coming over so much. A festival that features music and food is completely up my street, and trying all the Dubai restaurants in one great place is like my idea of heaven. I cannot wait!



- South African celebrity chef and host of her own Food Network show, *Jenny Morris Cooks Morocco*, Jenny Morris, also known as the Giggling Gourmet, lets us in on what's getting her excited to be at the event:

Dubai is a destination I often travel through, but only occasionally manage to stop off for a visit. At the festival I hope to meet many of my loyal viewers as well as my twitter and Facebook followers from the UAE. In the Chef's Theatre, I will be demonstrating an Asian-inspired dish and in the Cookery School, a Moroccan-inspired dish. During some of my demonstrations, I'm also going to be partnering with Reza Mahammad, which will give us a chance to not only showcase great recipes, but also have lots of fun in the process. In my spare time I'm hoping to explore some of the markets, shops and restaurants in and around the city.

NEW EVENT

Bringing an element of drama into the dining experience is the brand new Dining in the Dark concept. Already popular worldwide, Dining in the Dark is a fun way to test and tantalise not only the tastebuds, but all your senses, with food. At the event, which is hosted by local chef-for-hire and *BBC Good Food Middle East* contributor Andy Campbell, guests will be blindfolded and asked to sample three canapés accompanied by a glass of wine, then asked to identify 20 ingredients from a list of 100. Those who can correctly answer, based on their sense of taste, texture and smell, will be entered into a draw to win an exclusive fine dining experience at home with Chef Andy, worth Dhs5,000. Participation for this event costs Dhs30.

NEW RESTAURANTS

While Taste of Dubai regulars such as Rhodes Mezzanine and Ruth's Chris steakhouse will make their presence felt, there are a host of exciting new restaurants who have joined the fray, including leading restaurants from Armani Hotel, and *BBC Good Food Middle East* 2012 award-winner, Asado. Here are some highlights that we think you shouldn't miss checking out:

• **Armani Ristorante, Armani Hotel Dubai:**

Specialty head chef Alessandro Salvatico will offer regional Italian dishes with a menu featuring delicacies like Stracciatella (Burrata heart with eggplant caponata alongside tomato and basil); Fregola (Sardinian pasta with crab, shrimps, carrot, ginger and chives); and Vitello Milanese (Breaded Veal tenderloin, mashed peas and thyme sauce).



• **Frevo, Fairmont The Palm:** This new entrant to Dubai's dining scene will showcase the Brazilian Churrascaria experience it gives diners at the restaurant, with meat being served churrasco-style straight from skewers.

• **No.5 Lounge and Bar, Ritz Carlton DIFC:** This newly opened terrace lounge will bring its chic yet relaxed environment to the festival, to share their innovative tapas menu.

• **Izakaya, JW Marriott Marquis:** Dubai foodies love their Japanese, and they are sure to enjoy the variety – ranging from sushi to traditional hibachi-style food – that will be offered from this signature restaurant at the brand new Sheikh Zayed Road hotel.

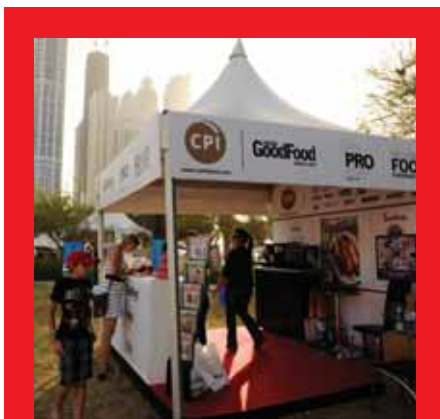
• **Thipthara, Palace Hotel Downtown Dubai:**

This traditional restaurant will serve up authentic Royal Thai cuisine including dishes like Prawn cake; Pomelo salad; Duck with tamarind sauce; and Thai custard cake.



NEW ENTERTAINMENT

The lineup of bands has been completely revamped, with leading local and international acts providing the live music at the venue. Highlights include Dubai-based multi-talented five-piece band The Boxtones; UK soul and jazz performer Rachel Calladine; popular Beatles tribute band from the UK, The Counterfeit Beatles; and South African pop artist Lisa Theunissen who will be belting out chart-topping hits. 



BBC Good Food Middle East will be there at **Taste of Dubai**, as always, so don't forget to stop by our stand – which will be located near the entrance – to say hello!



THE GUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR THIS YEAR'S TASTE OF DUBAI:

- **Dates:** March 14-16,
- **Place:** Dubai Media City Amphitheatre
- **Timings:** 4pm – 12am on March 14, 12pm-12am on March 15, and 12pm-11pm on March 16.
- **Ticket prices:** Standard ticket prices are available for Dhs60 online or Dhs80 at the door. VIP tickets (Fast track entry; two free drinks at the VIP bar; three free dishes from any restaurant, and a free prize draw entry) is available for Dhs200 in advance and Dhs240 at the door. Free entry for kids below 12.
- **Restaurants:** A range of outlets, from fine dining to the more casual, will be offering small platters of their signature dishes. Taste of Dubai favourites such as Ruth's Chris Steakhouse; Rivington Grill; Rhodes Mezzanine; Nobu; P.F Changs; Carluccio's; The Burger Joint; Gramercy; and Gaucho will be there, while new restaurants such as Armani Ristorante; Armani Amal; Thipatra; The Noodle House and Asado will also join the event for the first time.
- **Retail outlets:** There will be a variety of shopping options with various retail outlets, from the likes of Galleries Lafayette and Lakeland, to Coffee Planet setting up stalls.
- **Kid's entertainment:** The MumzWorld.com Kids Zone includes a bouncy castle, slides, library, dancing and a range of educational activities to keep children entertained.
- **Chef's demos:** Various leading chefs will be conducting demos and masterclasses at two different venues, the Philip's chef's theatre, and the more interactive Kenwood cookery school, where you can get involved in prepping dishes. Highlights include international celebrity chefs such as Reza Mahammad, Gizzi Erskine, Jenny Morris, Gary Rhodes; Richard Sandoval; Giorgio Locatelli; and Vineet Bhatia, as well as local chefs such as Paul Kennedy from Mango Tree and Simon Conboy from Rivington Grill.
- **VIP Lounge:** VIP ticket holders can access special privileges such as complimentary drinks and food vouchers, plus fast-track entry.
- **Entertainment stage:** A whole host of new bands from here and the UK, as well as DJs will keep guests entertained throughout the event.
- **Website:** Visit tasteofdubai festival.com.

A taste of things to come

The recently concluded Gourmet Abu Dhabi festival, which brought a range of international celebrity chefs and other gastronomic personalities together, showcased the vibrant restaurant scene in the capital. Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Celebrity chef Rachel Allen was a big draw at this year's Gourmet Abu Dhabi



International chefs also got the chance to sample local products



The event saw over two weeks of fine cuisine enjoyed by Abu Dhabi residents



The best of Abu Dhabi's F&B industry were recognised at the Gourmet Stars awards



Indian chef Imtiaz Qureshi, with his two sons, was popular with Abu Dhabi residents

"Six years ago, when we held Gourmet Abu Dhabi for the first time, we had six properties – and very limited choice. Today, we have 22 partners!" These are the words of Peter Knipp, CEO of Peter Knipp holdings, organisers of Gourmet Abu Dhabi. Having completed its fifth edition last month, the festival saw 56 culinary personalities, from chefs to producers and wine experts from around the world, descend on Abu Dhabi over 16 days, hosting masterclasses, demos, special dinners and a variety of other gastronomic events, as well as an awards ceremony recognising the best of Abu Dhabi.

The success of this event is a reflection of the rapid evolution of the food & beverage industry in the city. It is a fledgling industry no doubt, but one with lots of potential. With numerous leading new hotels and restaurants opening up in the last few years, the bar has truly been raised. "The industry has taken a steep curve, and has grown so rapidly, that it is almost at a level that can compete internationally," says Knipp.

Local culinary personality Saba Wahid who hosted some of the Gourmet Abu Dhabi events adds, "This is my second year participating, and even in a year's time, there have been several new developments around the city, promising things will get bigger and better every year!"

Many of the international visiting chefs agree. Chef Champol Jangprai, Thai Culinary Director of Anantara Hotels & Resorts, says, "In my opinion, the Arabic world was already rich in its recipes, flavours, spices, variety and nutritious values due to the advantage of its geographical location where East meets West which is very well reflected in their cuisine. The actual food scene is inspired from the past, but I believe it will soon become the largest gastronomy destination in the world, you can already come across chefs from all over the world bringing with them their stars and traditional recipes."

Chef and restaurateur Jason Black Hong Kong agrees. "It was my first visit here and I was as struck by the region as I was when I first moved to Hong Kong," he says. "I was fortunate to go to the local markets and was very impressed with the local produce, particularly camel meat."

The popularity of the event amongst Abu Dhabi residents was also a great illustration of the growing importance of, and demand for, high quality cuisine in the capital. Julie, an expat living in Abu Dhabi for six years, has been a Gourmet Abu Dhabi regular since its inception. "Even though the format of the event changed this year, to make the chef's culinary demos paid [they were free in previous years], I was amazed at how quickly they sold out," she says over lunch after Michel Rostang's demo. "I've been attending the events every year, and it is growing. It's such a great opportunity to interact with these leading chefs and try their fantastic food, all in our own city." Julie is just one of many foodies who look forward to these two weeks, and work their way through the various events held across the city's leading restaurants.

Not only is it a great opportunity for the city's residents, the visiting chefs look forward to the opportunity to interact with their colleagues from different corners of the globe too. Multiple Michelin star holder Michel Rostang says, "For me, it's very interesting to meet different chefs, it's nice to see what is happening around the world. It's also interesting to meet all the different people, expats who also know my restaurants in Paris."

Chef Chumpol adds, "Chefs love to explore each other's skills, innovations and exchange the knowhow of the culinary world, there is always room to discover and learn."



Visiting chefs got a chance to interact with their peers



Gourmet Abu Dhabi was a truly international event



Leading chefs hosted various masterclasses



Events were as much fun for the chefs as they were for the audience!



Teamwork was the name of the game

Ashfaq Qureshi, son of Indian masterchef Imtiaz Qureshi and leading restaurateur in his own right agrees, saying, "Not only do we get to see what other chefs are doing, but it's also a great forum for artists and investors both. It is being taken very seriously here, and goes to show that there is a big interest from the organised hospitality industry."

Exciting times are ahead, without doubt. And events such as this can only help spur growth. "Chefs that come here become ambassadors of the city in their countries," says Peter. "It also allows one to test the market with new concepts, it's a great R&D process."

"We are still in the building block stage. It was very challenging in the beginning, but interest in the local market is growing. Even though it may not yet have the level of sophistication as some other cities, if you think about how young it all is, the rate of evolution is much faster. In my opinion, in the next five-six years, don't be surprised if Abu Dhabi becomes a gastronomical destination for food enthusiasts around the world," Peter says. **GF**



BBC Good Food Middle East was one of the media partners at the event, and helped give away one of the awards at the Gourmet Stars awards, being sponsor of the Best Sustainability Practice award, which went to Fairmont Bab al Bahr hotel. Other awards handed out at the ceremony included Restaurant of the Year, Executive Chef of the Year, and Food & Beverage manager of the Year, among others, all of which recognise the industry professionals playing a significant role in the development of the sector.

Inspired by the Mediterranean

Food Club members gathered at the Hacker Kitchen showroom last month, for a masterclass with Thomas Pendarovski, executive chef at Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach. He showed how to make two simple seafood dishes and one decadent dessert which guests also tasted sampler portions of. Everyone took home a gift bag filled with goodies, and a lucky few even got their hands on dining vouchers and a Kenwood blender in the raffle draw. Here's how you can recreate these recipes at home. Photographs ANAS CHERUR



Chef Thomas Pendarovski



Food Club members were all eyes and ears at the masterclass



Chef Thomas was ably assisted by his team members



An array of fresh ingredients on the ready



BBC Good Food ME's Carol Owen introducing the chef



Guests tried drinks and canapés



Delicious samplers were enjoyed by all



The chef at his interactive best

Chef Thomas shared cooking tips and tricks



One lucky raffle draw winner received dining vouchers from Sofitel



Another lucky winner walked away with a Kenwood blender



Salmon rillettes

MAKES 2-4 portions



277g salmon fillet, skin and pin bones removed

Salt to taste

Freshly ground pepper to taste

1 tbsp butter

½ cup shallots, minced

2 tbsp sour cream

½ tbsp mayonnaise or crème fraîche

155g smoked salmon, chilled, skin and dark layer removed if necessary, cut into ¼ inch dice and brought to room temperature

2 tbsp lemon juice

¼ cup chives, minced

1 French baguette

1 tbsp olive oil

1 Trim and discard any dark flesh from the salmon fillet. Place the fish in a shallow baking dish and sprinkle each side with 1½ tsp salt and ¼ teaspoon of freshly ground pepper. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 to 60 mins, turning the fish over halfway through the marination.

2 In a pot bring water to a boil. Take the salmon from the baking dish and place it in the pot of boiling water, with the water barely covering the salmon. Remove

immediately from the heat and let it cook (once set aside) for 5-7 mins. Check the salmon by separating the flesh with the tip of a knife and peering at the centre. It should be medium-rare. When it is cooked, remove from the pot onto a paper towel.

3 Meanwhile, melt butter in a medium-sized pan over low heat. Add the minced shallots and cook, stirring every few seconds, for 2 mins. Season with a pinch of salt and continue to cook for 3 to 4 mins, until the shallots have softened but not browned. Remove from the heat.

4 Put the cooked salmon in a large bowl and mix to break it into large chunks while stirring in the remaining ingredients (the salmon pieces shouldn't be that small). Stir together with the smoked salmon, shallots, lemon juice, crème fraîche and chives. Season with ¼ tsp salt and ½ tsp pepper.

5 Transfer the rillettes to 2 ceramic or glass serving bowls, leaving at least ½ inch of space at the top. Smooth the top of the rillettes and wipe the inside rims clean. Refrigerate for about 1 hour, until cold.

6 To serve, slice 5 pieces of French baguette and coat with olive oil, season with salt and pepper and toast in the oven for 15 mins or until golden brown. Oven should be set at 160C. Once ready, place the rillettes onto a flat plate, arrange some of the toasted sliced French baguette and serve. >>



Brioche crusted halibut

SERVES 4

- 4 pcs halibut fillet ((around 160g each)
- 4 slice of brioche bread
- 6 each parsnip, peeled and chopped roughly
- 160g butter
- 100g cream
- Salt and white pepper to taste
- 75g baby artichokes, quartered (Canned artichoke can also be used)
- 100g chicken stock cube
- 5 sprigs of thyme
- 6 sprigs of parsley
- 2 dry bay leaf
- 20g onion, finely chopped
- 4 carrots, roughly chopped
- 4 sticks celery, roughly chopped
- Pinch of saffron threads
- 80ml fish stock
- 3 cloves of garlic, roughly chopped
- 1 green apple

1 To make the parsnip puree, in a pot of cold water, boil the parsnip until tender (approximately 10-15 mins). Drain the parsnips and place in a blender or mash with a potato masher. Add approximately 10g butter, cream, salt and white pepper to taste. Puree until you have a smooth consistency. Adjust the seasoning to your liking and set aside until ready to plate.

2 Braise the artichokes by adding 10g of butter to a shallow pan. When the butter has melted add the carrots, onions and celery.

Sauté for 3 mins, season with salt and white pepper to taste. Add the quartered artichokes, thyme, parsley, bay leaf and chicken stock. Let it simmer for 15 mins or until they are tender. Pierce the artichokes with the tip of your knife; if it comes out without any resistance then they are done. Set aside for plating.

3 Season each halibut fillet with salt and white pepper on both sides. Take the brioche slices and roll it to a thin layer ($\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch). Then take the halibut piece and place on top on the bread. Cut the bread so that it fits exactly under the halibut. Add some butter to a non stick pan, place the bread side down and crust the brioche until golden brown for approximately 2 mins. Flip it to the other side and bake in the oven at 180C for another 7 mins. When done, place aluminum foil over the fish to keep it warm.

4 To make the saffron sauce, place the fish stock in a small pot. Add the thyme, parsley, garlic and bring to a simmer. Adjust the seasoning with salt and white pepper. When the quantity of the stock is reduced by half, add the saffron threads and cream. Simmer for another 3 to 5 mins. Check for seasoning, strain the sauce through a fine sieve and set aside until ready to plate.

5 To serve, spoon the parsnip on one corner of a round plate. Add the braised artichokes to the middle of the plate. Place the brioche halibut on top of the artichokes. Take some of the saffron sauce and spoon around the plate. Slice the green apple into thin strips and place on top of the fish for garnish.

Panna cotta with coconut and passion fruit

SERVES 4

- 700ml double cream
- 2pc Madagascar vanilla bean
- 220g coconut powder
- 190g sugar
- 6-7g gelatin leaves
- 6 pieces fresh passion fruit
- Handful of berries, for garnish


1 In a large saucepan, combine double cream, coconut powder and 125g of sugar. Slice the Madagascar vanilla bean lengthwise and scrape out seeds into the cream.

2 Bring cream just to a simmer, whisking occasionally until sugar has completely dissolved. Place the gelatin leave in a container with ice water till become soft.

3 Remove the cream from heat, add the softened gelatin and whisk to completely dissolve into it. Strain the cream and leave it cool down a little.

4 Take the pulp from the passion fruit, place it into a saucepan with remaining sugar and let it reduce, on a very low flame for 15-20 mins. Strain it from the seeds and set aside to cool.

5 Pour the cream mixture into cups or mould of 40 to 50 ml size, gently swirl the cream to distribute the vanilla seeds evenly. Refrigerate for at least 3 hrs or overnight.

6 Carefully dip bottom of each mould in hot water, run a thin knife around the edge to loosen it from the inside. Wipe the outside of the mould dry, and place upside down on individual chilled serving plates. Invert the custard onto the plate and carefully lift off ramekin, shaking gently to release if required. Garnish with the passion fruit puree and berries and serve. 



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In next month's issue Spring cooking inspiration

- Gluten-free baking
- Recipes to celebrate the Thai New Year
- Why you should be eating more eggs



* Versatile ways with chicken



* Mini-breaks with a gourmet focus



* 30-minute suppers



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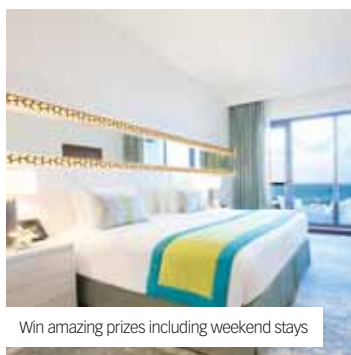
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What they said

Feedback from our Food Club members:

• Huge compliments to the team for a stunning Masterclass event. They are presented so professionally and are a fantastic showcase for the chefs and their restaurants. 🍷 – Paul Conroy

• Thank you for the invitation to the Masterclass. We really enjoyed ourselves and look forward to replicating the menu when we next have friends over. 🍷 – Liz Sandford

• Just wanted to say thanks very much for another wonderful, educational and tasty evening. My husband and I are very grateful to be able to attend these events. 🍷 – Annette Duke

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Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to event passes, up for grabs.



WIN! TICKETS WORTH OVER DHS2,400 TO TASTE OF DUBAI

15 lucky winners can get their hands on a pair of tickets to the foodie festival of the year that takes place from March 14-16 at Dubai Media City Amphitheatre. Sample dishes from your favourite restaurants, watch master chefs cook up a storm, listen to the music, and shop for gourmet products at the market.

WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT ANISE, INTERCONTINENTAL DUBAI FESTIVAL CITY, WORTH OVER DHS500

One winner can take along a dining partner to indulge in fresh seafood at the restaurant's seafood night on Thursday. With eight live cooking stations to head to, you can sample fresh lobster, shrimps, mussels, salmon and an assortment of fish, cooked to your liking.



WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT A.O.C FRENCH BRASSERIE, SOFITEL DUBAI JUMEIRAH BEACH, WORTH OVER DHS400.

One lucky winner can take a friend to this French-style brasserie to try out signature dishes with a contemporary twist, as well as international cuisine. Take a seat on the terrace and enjoy the views of the Gulf as you relax and indulge.

WIN! DINING VOUCHER WORTH DHS400 AT THE PIZZA COMPANY

Grab your friends and family and head to this popular pizza eatery to enjoy a selection of pizzas, fresh pastas, salads and breads. With a range of toppings including chicken, meat, seafood and roasted or grilled vegetables, there's something to suit every palate.



WIN! DINING VOUCHER WORTH OVER DHS350, FOR SUNDAY CARVERY AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA

Head down to Mazina at The Address Dubai Marina on a Sunday, and enjoy a selection of some of the finest roast meats and vegetables. One lucky winner gets a chance to try out this dinner offer on a Sunday.

WIN! AFTERNOON TEA FOR TWO, WORTH DHS295, AT ASPEN BY KEMPINSKI

Make your way down to this elegant café nestled in the luxurious lobby lounge of the hotel, and enjoy decadent pastries, scones with Devonshire cream and cucumber sandwiches, while sipping on the signature Tchaba tea, that is available in 20 varieties.



WIN! MEAL FOR TWO AT WAVEBREAKER, HILTON DUBAI JUMEIRAH, WORTH DHS255

One lucky winner and a partner can feast on juicy burgers and a refreshing pint at this beachside hangout while sitting back, watching the games on screen and enjoying a relaxed meal by the beach.

WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT CHANNELS, MEDIA ROTANA, WORTH OVER DHS150

One winner and a partner can savour French Polynesian specialties at the Pacific islands theme night that takes place every Saturday. Try dishes such as the exotic paella and baked mahi-mahi served with pineapple salsa, while quenching your thirst with refreshing exotic beverages.



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ANJANA CHATURVEDI, a 47-year old mother of two, from Uttar Pradesh, India, is the author of the blog Maayeka – which translates to a girl's mothers home in English – and has lived in Dubai for the last 27 years. While Anjana loves cooking for her family on a daily basis, she also loves unwinding with a good novel and reading various food blogs.

Culinary icons

Definitely my mother and grandmothers. The food I blog about isn't gourmet cuisine, it is simple, comfort food that anybody can cook, without the need specialty store ingredients – and this is the food they taught me to cook.

Kitchen gadget

I can't live without

A hand blender! It is definitely a kitchen essential.

Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the UAE's foodie community, one blog post at a time.

*About the blog

My daughter got married recently, and her incessant phone calls to me for recipes and tips made me realise that I should create a collection of recipes online, so that not only can other people enjoy and try out the selection of recipes, but also future generations in my family will have access to them. I realised that this way, my grandchildren would have recipes from their grandmother's personal cookbook, and be able to get a feel of what my cooking was like. One thing led to another, and in November 2011, Maayeka was born. It is now a portal for home chefs all over the world, and I absolutely love answering reader's cookery queries every day. On the blog you will find a cuisine called 'Saatvik' – which is basically vegetarian cooking without the use of onions and garlic. This style of cooking is prescribed in Ayurveda and originates from specific communities in India. Restaurants and eateries of this cuisine are hard to come by in the UAE, which is why I like to include these recipes on the blog, so that people can try it at home.

Top cooking tips

- * Never cook in a hurry! Cook in a relaxed mood and with love, and the food will always turn out good.
- * Always use seasonal ingredients. Off-season and non-local ingredients may look great, but seldom taste fresh – even though they are available at supermarkets throughout the year.
- * Asafoetida is a significant spice in Indian cooking. It has a strong smell when raw – however when added to hot oil, with other dry spices, it gives out a lovely aroma, and smells the exact opposite of what it is when raw.

I'd love to dine with...

Martin Yan from the TV show 'Yan can cook' – the first cookery show I ever watched. I would make a baked dessert, since anything that involves chopping could invite some disappointing looks by Yan (we all know how good he was at that!).

Favourite food memory

As a child, I remember watching my grandmother make huge quantities of lemon zest pickles and potato and lentil wafers, during the summer months in India. They were so delicious!

“My foodie inspiration sparks from the kitchens and corridors of North Indian homes.”

I cook with...

A sense of smell – I always use this to guide myself while cooking.

What I miss about India

The delicious food available at roadside shacks (dhabas) in North India.

Midday snack fix

Poha (flattened rice with spices), pineapple salsa sandwiches, sooji dhokla (savory semolina cakes), or stuffed parathas.



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